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# PUNCH

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## The London Charivari

A RECENT news photograph showing the crew of a U.S. aircraft carrier lined up on deck in a formation spelling out the phrase "Sea power for peace" provides yet another example of the sheer adaptability of the English language. To take an extreme contrast, one may imagine scenes of utter confusion on a ship of the People's Chinese Navy as the men jostle about trying to arrange themselves into "Down with the scheming Nationalists." But even the French might run into an occasional difficulty. How often, for instance, has an officer of the French Navy been heard to bellow "You three men there! Get fell in and form a cedilla! At the double!"

### Paper-tearing Act

SINCE *The Observer* told readers "how to make a bird with flapping wings out of a paper napkin" it has been



flooded out with requests for further exercises in the art of paper-folding, and affects to be surprised. Surely it doesn't think anyone reads all those pages?

### Babel Trouble

A REPORT from Rome describes how the Pope, talking to a party of American priests, asked them to excuse his language, when he meant to ask them

to excuse his English; in other words, what he thought he was saying was "Excuse my French."

### People Are Funny

THERE is a reluctance on the part of the public, says the annual report of the Council of the After-Care Association, to employ Borstal boys. This is



certainly surprising, especially as there is nothing much wrong with the youngsters; the Council say that they "can best be described as 'having a low threshold of stress and a low tolerance of frustration,'" and it seems time that someone diagnosed exactly what is wrong with the reluctant employing public.

### Penny Wise

BEFORE we go plunging into decimal coinage, as the Deputy Master and Comptroller of the Mint suggests we should, it is worth thinking of the virtues of the duodecimal. Twelve is divisible by two, three, four and six, compared with ten's meagre two and five; and our coinage system is almost its last stronghold. If we counted one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, onk, pul, ten, as we would if we had six fingers on each hand—and a few more radioactive years may bring





Marshal Gaitskell: "My centre is giving way, my right is in trouble, my left is chaotic, situation excellent. I shall attack."

us to that—then innumerable advantages would accrue: one gross would be 100; one third would be 40 per cent; a foot would be 10 inches long; and so on. And all the fiddling we'd have to do with the currency is make the pound worth twelve (i.e. 10) shillings—just about what it is, they tell me.

#### Good Value For Money

THE Deputy Master is also adrift, I think, when he recommends the abolition of the farthing. What contempt so searing as a farthing damages, what market quotation so trivial as five sparrows (St. Matthew inflationarily made it two) sold for a farthing, what extortion so rigid as payment to the uttermost farthing? Do away with the coin and you kill the phrase; no one cites saws about groats or rose-nobles. As for the drapers with their specious lure of 19s. 11½d. as a better bargain than £1, I don't care a brass farthing for them but I do want to keep the word; without it no phrases so graphic will ever be coined.

#### The Bits Left Over

UP and down the country they are hacking away curves, even noble curves, from our highways, to ease the progress of car-carriers and convoys of nitric acid. The lopped-off arcs of road

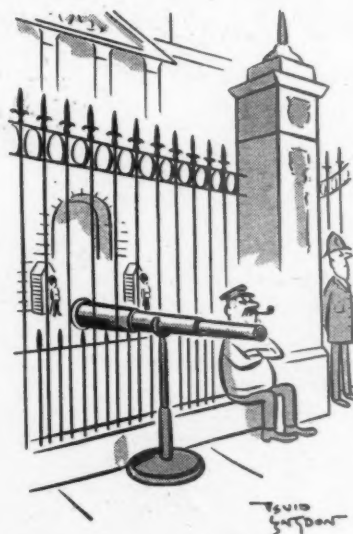
become lay-bys, with litter bins and mobile fish-supper shops. Eventually all the roads will be dead straight and one half of the petrolariat will be able to sit on abandoned stretches of tarmac and watch the other half hurtle by. When the turnpike operators shortened their roads, landowners hastened to filch the unwanted sections and restore them to agriculture. To-day, I imagine, anyone making such a novel proposal would find himself certified.

#### Nymphs in the Rye

AN aid to conviviality widely advertised in America is a refrigerator tray which produces ice cubes in the shape of naked women—bust size for short drinks, three-quarter length for long drinks. Men of Distinction, it seems, find them invaluable for starting up conversation. What happens when the nymph melts and becomes as formless as the torso of a forgotten field-marshal in the Tussaud melting-pot? Does the conversation freeze over again even as the ice melts? Let's try it out some time on Mr. Khrushchev. It could be as stimulating an occasion as that historic can-can.

#### Tantalizing Interview

THE editress of Loughborough College's banned "rag" magazine told a *Daily Express* reporter she did not understand some of the material she used. She just passed it along to the sub-editor, "a man," she declared, "whose name you'll never drag out of



**"AS THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN"**  
The second in the series of drawings in colour by Hewison, "As They Might Have Been," appears on page 383. The subject is:  
**RANDOLPH CHURCHILL**

me." It is an old Fleet Street tradition that editors protect their staffs, though generally from the proprietors rather than the staff of other papers, and it is to the *Express* man's credit that he did not throw himself on the editress and try to drag the name out of her, especially since he describes her as having big brown eyes, wavy golden hair and an elfish smile.

#### We Gotta Duke

THE extraordinary collections of people who apply to the I.T.A. to be chosen as Programme Companies are turning up to brighten the newspapers again. The rum assortment of names generally balances the aristocratic, the ingenious and the plutocratic, as, I suppose, companies of Elizabethan adventurers or monopolists did. Soon there may be other wildly composed groups bidding for other profitable public services, perhaps a bid for the Light Programme from Sir Malcolm Sargent, the Marquess of Salisbury, Tommy Trinder, Sir Herbert Read and Mr. Charles Clore. In time the financiers will be scraping the bottom of *Who's Who*.

#### No Jam To-morrow?

A YOUNG architect who has already startled people with his plastic house and his school built of black steel and white tiles has now produced a really revolutionary idea. City office blocks, he says, should be designed to look attractive from moving traffic. This proposal comes just too late. Mr. Marples is already working on the assumption that *any* building would look attractive from moving traffic.

#### Home Rails Buoyant

THE hallelujahs that greeted the end of currency restrictions for foreign travel went a bit diminuendo when British Railways put their fares up by several million pounds. Treasury sanction for permission to spend £250 a year on season tickets and trips to Margate will now be welcomed.

— MR. PUNCH





*"By the left—dress!"*

# THE ROAD TO 1984

*A series of probes for proles.  
This week's subject is . . .*



## Chicago Notebook By WILLIAM CLARK

*Chicago, September, 1984*

I HAD not visited Chicago till last week for a full twenty-five years, not since I went there to report on the royal visit of 1959; but I had lived there for five years as a young man so it was an exciting, nostalgic return.

The flight out from London took over four hours because of the crowded conditions over the Mid West, with so many people coming in for the Democratic Party Convention, which is to choose the man everyone believes will be the next President. As a result of the delay I was taken directly from the Lake Airport to the Convention Hall—a newish building which I found quite exceptionally beautiful. Indeed in the brief drive through the streets what struck me was how ugly the few old

concrete skyscrapers seemed (ugly but familiar), and how lovely all the new buildings of the past ten years looked.

The universal use of the Permalux plastic makes it possible for them to be moulded into any shape unbroken by windows, while they sparkle like a hoard of jewels. And surely no one can now deny that recent American architecture is the most restrained and exquisite in the world. In this as in the other arts this renaissance has been startling in its sudden completeness.

I got to the Convention Hall late, when the prayer meeting had been going on for nearly an hour, but still I was in time to hear the main speech which was given by Presiding Bishop Sawyer, the present head of the American-Catholic Church. Though I had often seen him on my television wall—it has been my habit for the past few years to tune in to the American stations after our midnight—this was the first time I had seen him in the flesh.

He was even more impressive than I expected. Like so many American men to-day he managed to combine rugged good looks with a certain epicene charm, but he had taken the trouble to dress in the most striking sapphire suiting with matching ornaments, which made it difficult to take one's eyes off him. Looking round the hall at the 1,500 delegates I was struck by what infinite pains the men took in their appearance and how dowdy the few women appeared by contrast. I suppose that is

part of the general decline of feminine influence since housekeeping here became a branch of engineering.

Dr. Sawyer's keynote sermon was not very long, but I suppose almost 200 million Americans must have watched it. For myself, sitting only some fifty yards away, I could see how this man had come to hold one of the two or three most powerful positions in America: his appearance and oratory could have taken him to the top anywhere, and his intellectual ability combined with deep sincerity had shown him the right path. He was a Senator when the first American Pope was elected, but within weeks he had entered the Church just because he knew that was where real power was going to lie. Now he was making the speech that would decide American policy for the next year or two, for no Democratic President or Congress would dare gainsay him.

He began with the usual tribute to the solidarity of the Russo-American alliance, saying that it was the only basis of true world peace, and the only protection of civilization against the hordes of barbarism. But I could not help feeling that the Bishop, like many members of his Church, was not really quite happy about his relations with Marxism—it was a marriage of convenience that no sensible American would wish to end, or could end without disaster, but Dr. Sawyer clearly felt less warmly towards Moscow than he spoke.



The rest of his speech—dealing with America's mission in this world—bore out this preliminary judgment. It was little more than a snide attack on materialism, on the pursuit of wealth, and, by implication, on the Soviet way of life. He boasted about America's present comparative poverty (comparative, I must say, only with Moscow or Berlin—they still seem better off here than we are in London or Paris), and kept on saying that the lack of worldly goods was what enabled America to concentrate on its real cultural mission, which was to produce the good intellectual life here in the United States.

He concluded with a scarcely veiled sneer at Russia in which he said that America to-day had the role of the Ancient Greeks, to civilize by example and advice those nations which had been led by the lust for material things to turn their backs on beauty and concentrate on ruling the world. I looked rather

nervously up at the box where the Russian Ambassador was sitting alone, but he was chuckling at some private joke.

The rest of the morning was filled with shorter speeches by lesser men—the various Presidential candidates and some distinguished figures of the Party. One thing that stood out was that very few of the speakers really shared the Bishop's pleasure at America's failure to raise its standard of living over the past fifteen years. Comparative poverty may be good for the soul, but most of the older people present were unable to understand what had stopped them in their tracks when they had seemed set on the path to unlimited horizons of wealth.

The most usual explanation was that America had ruined herself in the '60s by her efforts to keep India out of the alliance with China, through colossal subventions. No one, I noticed, mentioned

the simultaneous competition to keep up with Russia, which also played its part in America's economic collapse.

But though Russia was clearly not as popular as the Government would like to pretend, the real mood of this Convention was not at all anti-Russian—it was slightly isolationist and violently anti-Asian. Western Europe really did not matter—Asia, and of course particularly the Sino-Indian alliance, was the bogey. It was odd to hear a negro speaker talk of the "yellow peril"; usually the phrase was "the hordes of barbarism."

The preliminaries were closed in the late afternoon by a speech from a Senator, Truman Capote, the Grand Old Man of American literature, who reverted to the theme of America's cultural leadership in the Russo-American alliance and in the world. It was a witty, brilliant speech and it deeply moved the audience when he



"The fact he couldn't look you in the eyes is hardly evidence, Mrs. Bronson."





ended by saying "We must earn the respect of the world or perish. Since we gave up our own nuclear weapons and left those accursed things to the two giants Russia and China we have lost the power to frighten others; we must seek now to gain their love. How can we do that? Not by gifts of machinery, loans of money, or shipments of food—we cannot afford *them* anyway now—but by making ourselves, our land, our lives, our theatre, our painting, our writing, our broadcasting and our architecture something of which we can be proud, and of which the world will be envious."

A few desultory resolutions were put forward—mostly about "dollars for culture"—and then the Convention adjourned. It will not meet again till after all the voting—which is done from everyone's homes electronically. This voting is all rather a farce since no one doubts the result—Waldo Emerson Humbert will be nominated and elected. The Democrats are bound to win—it's their turn—and Humbert cannot possibly fail to get the nomination because the whole syndicalist vote will go to him. Last time old Lockheed Brown, the head of the aero industry, got the nomination by acclaim, and after him it's really the turn of the second biggest industry—the Music Corporation—and Humbert is their man. Of course there is some grumbling about the way The Industries dominate the show, but since the Labour Leaders and Top Management joined forces twelve years ago they have been pretty well invincible in the supposed "choices" both of politics and of consumer goods.

It is less certain who will get the Vice-Presidency, since The Industries do not try to control that; and even though the post now involves spending a year as Ambassador in Moscow, there is considerable competition for it. The most likely contenders are: a Negro, who

represents the nearly a quarter of the population which is now coloured; a New York lawyer, who would satisfy some of the East Coast voters who resent the fact that Chicago has become the cultural and economic capital; and lastly a medical psychiatrist who represents the most powerful pressure group outside the Church and The Industries—but I think the Bishops will stop him.

After the Convention I had the evening free before catching the 'plane back to London, and I had an opportunity of seeing something at first hand of the modern American way of life. It is very different from a quarter of a century ago. Two things struck me at once while walking around—Chicago is now so quiet and so clean. Both are due to regulations—a city ordinance that no machine may make more than ten decibels of noise, chiefly to prevent interference with the open-air concerts in the parks; and the very strict national health laws which have effectively stopped litter and rubbish. It was the same health campaign that led to prohibition of smoking—on the usual lung-cancer grounds—and that seems to have been enforced 100 per cent, which also makes for cleanliness.

Chicagoans still eat dinner very early by our standards, 6.30–7.00, but that is because all the television shows, concerts, and ballets begin at 8. They like to eat their light meal slowly, while discussing which of the twenty programmes they will watch on TV or whether to go to the innumerable concerts, ballets, theatres, or lectures.

We all know from tuning in to American stations how desperately serious their television is—it was this competition of course which killed off our Third Programme—but I had not realized how seriously they took it. At 10 o'clock there is a break in transmission during which each group solemnly discusses what it has been

watching, writes a critique and sends it off to The Industry. I doubt whether The Industry pays any attention—they are really under the thumb of the Ministry of Culture anyway—but it satisfies the American passion for expressing opinions, for voting, for seeming to participate in everything. It's not generally realized, but in America everyone holding a University degree—and that means almost everyone over 21—can vote on all political and cultural referenda, as often as twice a week.

\* \* \* \* \*

There is no doubt that America in 1984 is by far the biggest producer of works of art in the world to-day—all their old mechanical genius seems to have gone into it. But they have not yet mastered the art of good, or at least of contented, living. Beautiful houses, excellent food and wine, the best of entertainment, yet a general discontent. Why? One pointer is the number of questions they ask a European about our Russian area—isn't American ballet better than Moscow's? Don't you think Chicago's town hall is far lovelier than that at Sverdlovsk? Of course Russian 'planes are bigger and faster than America's, but aren't ours far more comfortable and reliable? (The answer in each case is no.)

America, because of this sense of insecurity, would like to find respite by turning in on itself and ignoring the world—but it cannot because it must get raw materials from abroad, and it needs to be part of an alliance to protect itself against Asianist satellites nearer home—in Latin America. Instead therefore it gripes about the world, and strikes rather ludicrous poses about the superiority of culture to cash, and the superiority of its culture to other more modern flashy societies (that's one in the eye for Russia, which it hates yet cannot afford to offend).

But really America's unease derives from the fact that though she is doing a good job with her Arts it is not what she really wants to do. Most Americans still hanker for the supreme power they used to wield thirty years ago (hence the current idolization of John Foster Dulles). They would really rather be the richest nation on earth instead of the most cultivated. At heart they are disappointed; this was to have been the American Century—and it isn't.

*Next Week:* **DESMOND DONNELLY**

# Another Election on Dec. 8th? By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

*A new quiz for the long November evenings*

**I**T is beginning to look as though we all made a fearful mistake three weeks ago when, if you remember, there was a General Election. I have been listening steadily ever since to clever people explaining "Why We Lost" and "How We Won"; I have communed with, among others, Henry Fairlie, Bernard Levin, Douglas Jay, Charles Curran, Paul Johnson, Michael Foot and Lord Hailsham, and I am convinced that the electorate was pretty well in the dark about the real issues.

If we could have October 8 all over again (be fun, wouldn't it?) are you sure that you would put your little cross in exactly the same place? To help you

to decide for yourself I have devised a simple test. Answer the following questions as honestly as you are able, look at the correct answers at the foot of column 3, next page, and then award yourself the appropriate marks.

If you gross forty and upwards you are unrepentant; if your total lies between twenty and forty answer the questions again on a fresh piece of paper; if you score less than twenty you have been dished and should start campaigning *now* for a December re-election.

1. (a) Did you think, before the Election, that the word "Labour" was out of date in this age

of computers? (The B.B.C. actually used a computer to calculate the swing away from Labour. Can you *beat* that?)

- (b) Did you regard the term "Socialist" as anti-social and hopelessly class-conscious?
- (c) Did you consider the word "Conservative" somehow suggestive of jam, jam with it, jam on it?
2. (a) Did you visualize the possibility of Lord Hailsham being put in charge of Science?
- (b) Were you prepared to accept Sir David Eccles back at the Ministry of Education?



*"At home he never looks at it."*

- (c) Did you honestly believe that Ted Heath could swing it?
3. (a) Were you dazzled by Gaitskell's promise not to raise income-tax?
- (b) Did you feel that Labour's generous pensions policy and timid H-bomb policy cancelled each other out so far as your personal future is concerned?
- (c) Did you regard the fate of the Eleven Plus as a party matter? And if so, how many children have you?
4. (a) Did you know when you voted that fares were going up, that the overseas travel allowance was to be de-restricted, that sheet steel was about to be in short supply, that two hundred collieries were to close down?
- (b) Were you aware that prices were falling, production was rising, sterling getting stronger?
- (c) Did you know that Mr. Butler was contemplating matrimony?
5. (a) Did you quake at the thought of

trusting Harold Wilson with your Premium Bonds?

- (b) Did you imagine Barbara Castle as Colonial Secretary?
- (c) Could you see Tom Driberg at the Ministry of Labour?
6. (a) Do you now realize that the Tories ran a successful pre-election poster campaign?
- (b) Do you believe that the Conservatives created commercial TV to ensure that Mr. Cube, the Iron and Steel Federation, the Institute of Directors and the Conservative Central Office would have a receptive, malleable audience?
- (c) Were you influenced by the damnably clever Tory alteration of Labour's posters to "Britain Belongs to Hugh"?
7. (a) Did you fear that Labour would press on with its "back-door nationalization" scheme for 600 companies?
- (b) Did you expect Mr. Macmillan to denationalize coal, railways, gas, electricity, the Post Office and the Bank of England?
- (c) Were you prepared to leave such vitally important matters as space travel, nuclear power and atomic weapons in the

hands of public, national authorities?

8. (a) Did you know that Macmillan had borrowed Labour's policy?
- (b) Did you know that Gaitskell had borrowed Macmillan's policy?
- (c) Did you know what Grimond's policy was?
9. (a) Knowing what you now do would you agree that Mr. Macmillan ought to be invited to re-think Labour's programme for 1964?
- (b) Are you now in favour of a Lab-Lib hook-up?
- (c) Do you think it about time the Conservatives dropped their National Liberals?
10. (a) At one time during the televising of the Election Results ITV was two constituencies ahead of the B.B.C. Does this suggest to you that the next TV channel should go to the commercial boys?
- (b) Only one paper, *Punch*, forecast the results with complete accuracy. Were you swayed by our predictions?
- (c) Do you now think that there was a carriage or a miscarriage of justice on October 8?
- (Answers and marks unavoidably transferred to column 4)

## Man in Apron

by Larry



On the Proposed Attempt to prove the Existence of the Loch Ness Monster if Necessary by Killing It

"I THINK, therefore I am." Thus long ago  
A wise man found existence evident.

But we, adept in slaughter, sager grow.

"It's dead, therefore it was." We are content.

—T. R. JOHNSON





# Coining It

By ALEX ATKINSON

IF the Deputy Master and Comptroller of the Royal Mint wishes to press forward with his grandiose plans for whittling down the penny, eliminating the florin or flooding the market with silver ten-shilling pieces weighing half an ounce each and having a raised inscription round the edge I shall of course make no move to hinder or impede him, because Deputy Masters and Comptrollers of Mints must have a hard enough time as it is, sitting there day after day watching the threepenny bits come clanking down the production line and wondering where it's all going to end. They are entitled to their whims and fancies.

"Look here, Wilkins," one can imagine a Deputy Master saying during coffee-break one morning, above the roar of the mighty machines that keep stamping FID:DEF:IND:IMPO on halfpennies day in day out under the watchful eye of the Deputy Proof Reader, "it's high time we did something about all these two-shilling pieces. People are getting pretty well sick and tired of them, you realize that, I suppose?"

"The dear old florin, sir?"

"Don't let's be sentimental, Wilkins. People keep finding the things in their change. They stand there fumbling in the shop and bring out a selection of coinage, intending perhaps to pay for a new cravat or a bottle of Beaujolais, and there the things are—stupid, round useless lumps of cupro-nickel with nasty sharp edges that wear a hole in a man's trouser pocket quicker than a bunch of keys."

"They are not dissimilar in shape to the good old half-crown piece, sir, and latest reports show that that is proving very popular on the whole. People seem to like to have them about."

"Don't change the subject, Wilkins. In the days when they were made of silver it was a different story. Five hundred florins would melt down comfortably into a very acceptable tea-pot, I remember. A tin-full buried in the ground behind some lonely hill-farm would last pretty well indefinitely, and give the hard-pressed tenant-farmer a feeling of security, thus making for a buoyant economy and creating a spirit of pioneering and exploration among the

youth of the village. But now they'll have to go. I tell you the people hate them!"

"Pray don't bang the table so, sir. See how this pile of queried sixpences is tottering."

"They must go! They've been hanging about ever since 1849, and the country's fed up with them. And think! With a little ingenuity we could rejig the machine and start turning out aluminium ninepenny pieces! You have to move with the times, Wilkins, and we've simply got to put our thinking caps on. Do stop biting that penny, it's already been through the Testing Shed twice. What suggestions have you?"

"Well, sir, if you insist, it's not quite our department but I have long thought that a deckle-edged five-pound note might go down very well. Less formal, you know, for Christmas presents. You might have an inscription at the top, in decorative script: 'From . . . . . with love/kind regards from . . . . .'"

"You have unsuspected depths, Wilkins. Anything else?"

"A magnetic sixpence would be a great boon, I feel. Equipped with a reasonably powerful magnet, which could be made available at H.M. Stationery Office for a modest sum—say two shillings?—a person spilling his change in a dimly lit saloon bar would be able to gather in his sixpences without fuss. Half-crowns present no problem here: people fall over themselves to recover them for you. It's the sixpences that tend to get lodged in the sawdust behind chair-legs, and they add up to a tidy sum during the life-span of a normal drinker."

"Hmm. Or phosphorescent, do you think? The tanner that glows in the dark?"

"No, sir. The introduction of a radioactive coinage would almost certainly provoke awkward letters in *The Lancet*. Then I have myself long felt the need for some square twopence-ha'penny pieces. The unaccustomed shape would make them easily identifiable by a touch in a pocket full of loose change, and the vendors of evening newspapers would have their labours enormously reduced. Also, being square, the coins would not so readily

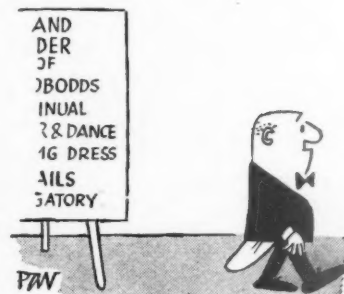
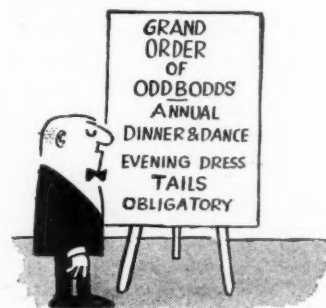
roll off their orange-boxes and so disappear down the steps of the Underground."

"I see your point. What would you say, now, to a coin worth nineteen and elevenpence ha'penny?"

"A splendid idea! We could call it a teaser. And with a little ingenuity I see no reason why we shouldn't eventually devise a coin of which the value will alter according to prevailing conditions, for the payment of single-stage fares on buses."

"No reason at all, Wilkins. You see, once we've got these confounded florins out of the way there is no limit to the useful work we can settle down to. For instance, now, what's your honest opinion of the shilling? I mean, just look at it. What's it for? What does it mean to the average man in the street? I tell you here and now, Wilkins, there is a strong feeling growing in this country . . ."

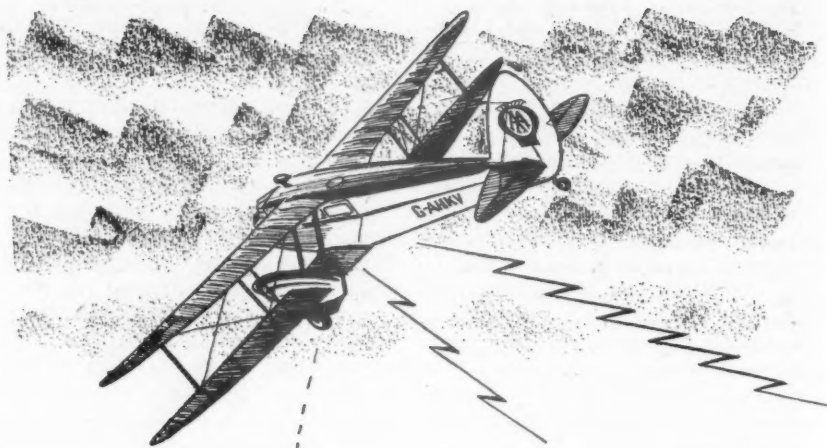
"Please, sir, not so loud, I beg. Men in the street are beginning to stare in at us."



THE London-Birmingham Motorway is one of the great imponderables. Nobody knows what will happen when it opens next week. Nobody knows how much traffic will use it, or what kind, or how behaved. Nobody knows—people may guess, but nobody *knows*—how fearsome a schemozzle will develop at the Motorway's terminal points. Nobody knows anything, yet, about our first, our one and only Motorway.

What, by the way, is a Motorway?

It can be defined by the method of prohibition. "PROHIBITED ON MOTORWAY," say the Ministry of Transport's signs on access roads, "L-drivers, Motorcycles under 50 c.c., Mopeds, Pedal-cycles, Invalid carriages, Pedestrians, Animals." The order is interesting, and so are the omissions. Obviously the sign could not explicitly mention every contingency; if it listed motor mowers, land-yachts and other abnormalities the writing would have to be continued on the back. But what of veteran cars earlier than 1900, combine harvesters, and those things with wide curved teeth that are such a nuisance on narrower roads? What about tanks, tractors, excavators, travelling cranes, steamrollers? One would like a clear ruling on these points. And what of penalties? What, for instance, is the maximum fine for attempting to drive a flock of sheep along M1?



## M1 For Murder

By H. F. ELLIS

A more positive way of defining a Motorway, for those who can legally use it, is to say that in theory at least nothing throughout its length can come at you sideways or head-on, or obstruct you by stopping, or indeed impede you in any way save by going slower than you wish at a time when the faster lanes are temporarily occupied. M1 has three lanes in each of its dual carriageways,

and the rule is that you may keep to the centre lanes when the left-hand lane is occupied by slower-moving vehicles. The third, outer, lane is for overtaking only. There is nothing unheard-of, or even unfamiliar about that. The picture that emerges is of a steady 45-50 m.p.h. stream of small saloons in the left-hand lane, a rather more widely spaced stream of 6-cylinder cars occupying the centre lane at 60-70 m.p.h., and in the outer lane an occasional sports car overtaking at ninety.

It is a pleasing picture, and probably bogus. One hears the gloomiest forecasts. The knowledgeable say that motorways drive men mad. It is not just that the young and ardent drive their motor-cycles, their TR3s and their Austin-Healeys competitively at ninety-plus; that is to be expected. There are old fools as well. "They crouch," one observer told me, who had seen them at it on the Preston By-pass (hitherto our nearest approach to a Motorway), "they hunch themselves over the wheels of their small saloons, beating the last ounce out of their gasping cylinders, drunk with glory, determined not to be outdone, bewitched by the long straight miles ahead. Their eyeballs glare, their withered jaws are set; it is anybody's guess, as the ridiculous, frightening spectacle plunges past, whether man or machine

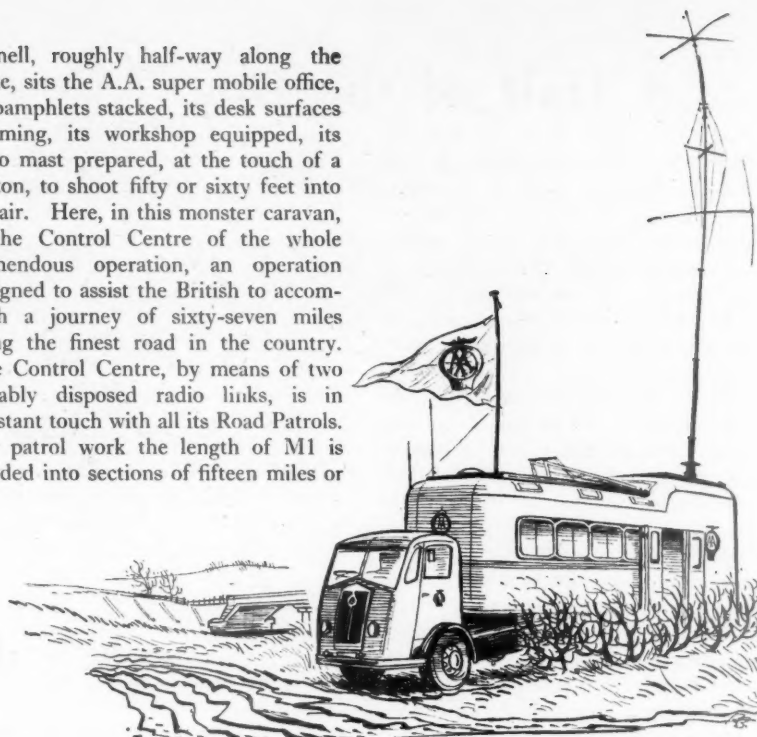


vibrates the more, or which of them, for that matter, will blow up first." Quite sensible, respectable drivers, he told me, become corrupted on a Motorway. They intend no evil. The steady 50-55 that is their normal gait will be enough for them. But in a mile or two the sense of freedom from interruptions, the heightened tempo of the road, the *whizz-whizz* of passing vehicles, infects their blood. The needle creeps into the sixties, into the seventies, to the ultimate middle eighties. Without conscious volition they are driving at speeds clean outside their experience and skill, happily unaware of the paralyzing effects that, let us say, unbalanced wheels can produce at higher speeds, of the big-end in its death agonies beneath them. Huge lorries, too, released from the constraints of A5 . . .

The picture that now emerges is of a great truck lumbering along at sixty in the left-hand lane, while an old fool in a worn-out soap-box, with his bowler crammed down over his eyes, tries desperately to pass it in the centre lane at a flat-out sixty-one. In the third lane, a stream of normally rational people in unbalanced saloons strive to overcome wheel-wobble in the eighty-fives, the clattering of their big-ends deafening them to the frenzied hootings of a batch of motor-cyclists coming up from behind at 100 m.p.h.

Nobody knows what will really happen. But whatever it is the Automobile Association is determined to be ready for it. If anything were needed to reinforce the impression that M1 is something new in British motoring the A.A.'s arrangements supply it. Not since D-day have such preparations for battle been made. Already at the Broughton Fly-over, near Newport

Pagnell, roughly half-way along the route, sits the A.A. super mobile office, its pamphlets stacked, its desk surfaces gleaming, its workshop equipped, its radio mast prepared, at the touch of a button, to shoot fifty or sixty feet into the air. Here, in this monster caravan, is the Control Centre of the whole tremendous operation, an operation designed to assist the British to accomplish a journey of sixty-seven miles along the finest road in the country. The Control Centre, by means of two suitably disposed radio links, is in constant touch with all its Road Patrols. For patrol work the length of M1 is divided into sections of fifteen miles or



so, each section terminating in a fly-over, and at all times from eight in the morning to eight at night two patrol cars will be trundling endlessly round each section. In addition, two other patrol cars will run continuously from end to end of the Motorway, and in addition to that the A.A.'s Dragon Rapide will, for the first fortnight anyway, fly up and down, up and down, reporting to Control what goes on, and even talking direct to patrol cars if it feels the need.

The A.A. feel that their first task is to get any broken-down car off the roadway with the maximum speed, and even when it is off the road and on the hard "shoulder" that lines M1 throughout its length they regard its presence there as a distraction and an affront that must be removed as soon as possible. Away with it! If the air patrol spots a car standing on the shoulder it will, so the chief pilot Mr. Don Whitehead tells me, immediately report the nuisance to Control Centre, who will alert the nearest road patrol, who will increase his rate of rotation until he arrives on the scene. So, even if you have merely pulled off the road to light a cigarette (which you have no business to do), you are quite likely to hear the roar of a

circling 'plane, to be followed soon after by the arrival of a patrol car intent on towing you away. Perhaps the long-distance all-the-way patrol will happen along too, and certainly, if you prolong the argument for twenty minutes or so, the second patrol car in your section will come rotating round. He can't help himself, you see. A police car or two will very likely stop by to see what the trouble is. It will be quite a party. But after all, as Mr. Whitehead pointed out, it won't be entirely a waste of time if a rescue squad arrives to help a motorist light a cigarette; the incident will help him to remember to keep going another time.

Well, we shall soon see how it will all turn out. Meanwhile, until opening day on November 2, the great road lies slumbering. It is an impressive sight. With its cuttings and embankments, its wide curves and gentle gradients, the many bridges that span it, it has more the air of a giant railway than a road. Yet it is so obviously what a roadway ought to be. Whether, as you lean over the parapet of a fly-over and survey the triple-laned tracks sweeping away northward and southward into the distance, M1 excites or frightens you is purely a matter of temperament.





# A Hair of the Dog

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

**M**R. TONY HANCOCK had spent a week in a nursing-home resting his wits and still described himself as "fragile" when a girl-reporter called to interview him. According to her girl-report, which hit the nation's breakfast tables next morning, she tried to cheer him up by telling him jokes.

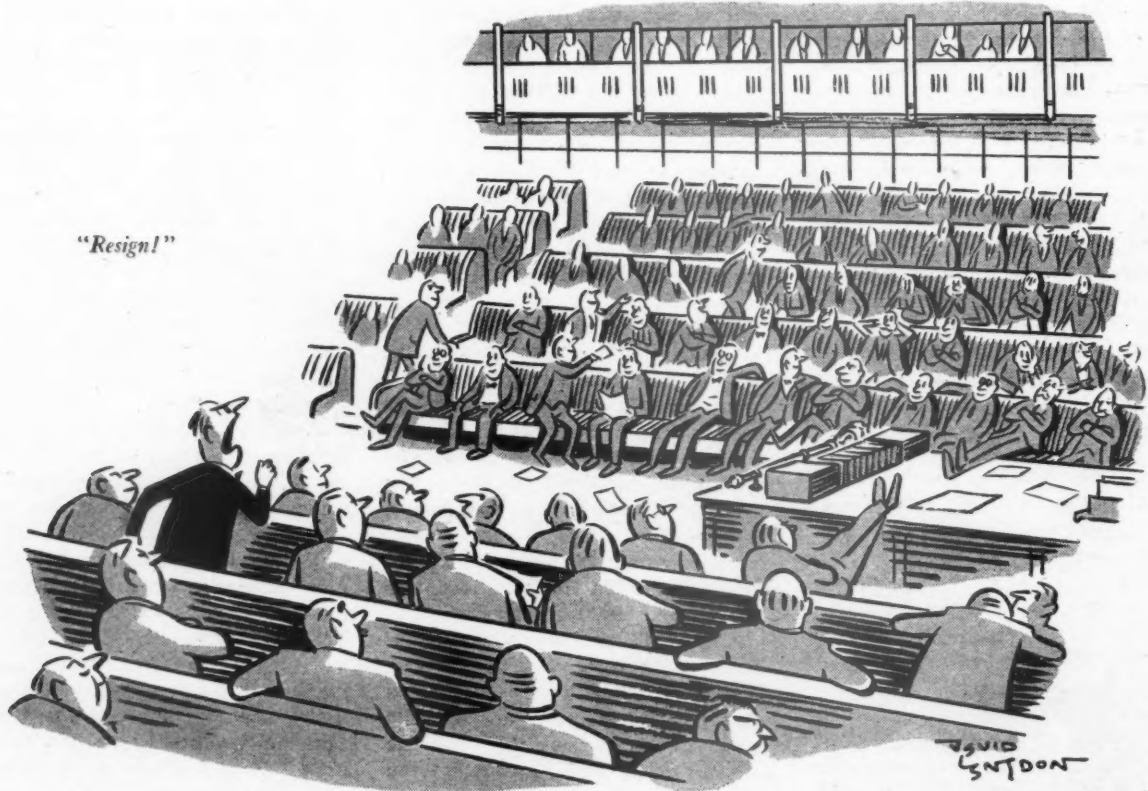
To the layman this probably looks like just another example of the big-headedness of modern Fleet Street; in the old days, after all, a girl-reporter interviewing an eminent comic would have told readers how he tried to cheer her up by telling *her* jokes . . . But to anyone in the joke business the incident takes on an altogether uglier shape: personally, I see it as an intrusion into private grief of the most blatant and unfeeling kind. It isn't easy to convey this to a man who lives by being serious, and has never known the poignancy of jokelessness at a time when jocularity is

vital to his spiritual, not to say financial, welfare; but you might care to imagine yourself in a shaded sick-room, too weak to do more than scrabble feebly in the direction of the grapes, when a friend enters with a pair of parallel-bars and tries to cheer you up with a half-hour display at the end of the bed.

Mr. Hancock's visitor, of course, wasn't to know any better. She was just a simple reporter. She shared the common belief that the comedian's natural state is one of laughter, and when she saw the downward turn of her host's mouth corners she felt instinctively that it was her job to turn them up again. This is one of the hazards of the profession. Speaking as a humble operator in the Hancock field—over there in the far corner, behind that bush—I would say that the majority of comedians now in the psychiatric wards have been put there by people who have come up to them at wine and

cheese parties and said "I know this will appeal to you, with your sense of humour . . ." and displayed a torn scrap of newspaper with the word "friend" misprinted as "fiend," or recounted an experience by a colleague of theirs which was in some way connected with the purchase of a pair of Wellington boots, though they can't recall the exact detail on which the whole comedy of the thing turned . . . ("You should have heard him tell it—we were in fits.")

The trouble arises from the bizarre nature of the humorist's vocation, which has called him to work at what is another man's play. Men whose professions are plainly a mere device to keep solvent are allowed to abandon them as soon as the hooter goes. It is seldom, I imagine, that the chartered accountant finds himself cornered at a party by a man who tells him about the most unforgettable balance sheet he ever met, or some





amusing discrepancy in the books of a business associate. I imagine that the doctor, on any purely social occasion, is relatively free from a rush of fellow-guests rolling up their trouser legs to show him an interesting varicose vein. Fixed office hours are commonly respected. The corn-chandler puts his hat on at five o'clock and goes home; he isn't going to be continually stopped in the street by friends offering him handfuls of corn to chandle, and the same is very probably true of the ironmonger, the atomic physicist, the undertaker.

It is the humorist's additional misfortune that, through no fault of his own, his social reputation suffers. If he is feeling at the top of his form, after a rewarding day's work which has yielded perhaps as many as two jokes, both to the best of his knowledge and belief original, and neither so bad as to demand rehearsal of a supplementary gag about the slowness of the audience, he may well be in a broadly expansive mood when he at last rises creaking from his chair; he can face his friends, as they bear down on him with their aunt's droll experiences at Euston, or even their accounts—broken by helpless laughter—of a gem produced by a rival comedian on the radio the night before. But when his day's work has yielded nothing but a raw place in the brain, and a wish that he had been born a tragic poet (whose material, it seems to him, is constantly pressing to be splashed on paper), he finds it harder to take. It is then that he receives without comment of any kind the efforts of his friends to cheer him up by telling him jokes. As the Englishmen, the Irishmen and the Scotchmen crowd in upon him, each leading a shaggy dog to whom a funny thing happened on the way to the

theatre to-night, he backs away trembling and the room fills with dark cries of "All right, sourpuss," "Call yourself a comic?" and "Oh, leave him alone, he's sulking."

That girl-reporter, perhaps wisely, went into no details of the jokes she told Mr. Hancock, though she left us in no doubt that they had done their work. "Thirty-five-year-old Hancock thanked me for coming," she reported innocently—"thanked me for the joke contributions, and for cheering him up."

Read between the lines, reader; read between the lines! Hancock admirers, admire him more than before!—a man not only of comedy but of character. This was his finest half-hour.

☆

"Two nuclear bombs were found in a field in a remote part of Kentucky to-day . . . One was described as a hydrogen bomb . . . Air Force officials hurriedly covered it with blankets . . ."—*Daily Telegraph*  
Those security ones?

## A Man's a Man For a' That

WERE I to write biographies  
I'd shun those drear recitals  
Of famous personalities'  
Discarded styles and titles.

For instance, I should not refer  
To Viscount Bate of Bicester  
In '31 as "Lord (then Sir . . .) . . ."  
Or, earlier, "Sir (then Mr.) . . ."

Because at school, in '98,  
The sharer of my den was  
In fact none other than Lord Bate  
(Old Stinker, as he then was).

— E. V. MILNER

### PRESENT LAUGHTER

TO mention Christmas now seems alarmist, and we apologize. It is simply to remind you that far-flung friends, muttering last dates for posting, are already busy with paper and string and greetings, and that this is the year you swore to send early (last year), and really get in first (at last). So let us send them PUNCH throughout 1960. You'll get in not only first but fifty-two times. No paper, no string. We even send the greetings on your behalf to arrive at Christmas. (But you will have to send us the name and address of yourself and your friend together with a remittance to Department ED., PUNCH, 10 Bouverie St., London, E.C.4.) Subscription details (including all seasonal numbers plus the extra *Punch Almanack*):

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# HOME MOVIES ON TRIAL

E.S. TURNER

**T**HIS is the season when millions of unsuspecting (and even suspecting) citizens are exposed to holiday movies.

As an experiment, one hundred films selected at random from the year's output were shown recently to a chained audience. The results were disturbing. When questioned twenty-four hours afterwards three quarters of the audience said they could remember nothing whatever of what they had seen, even though *every film* contained a shot of a bare-bottomed child being dipped in a cold sea. The remaining quarter said all they recalled was the title "THE END" because it had a funny sketch of the back half of a dachshund. This audience was destroyed and a new

one empanelled, but the results were substantially the same.

It is necessary, therefore, to consider: What, if anything, is wrong with holiday movies? Is legislation needed to suppress them? These questions can best be answered by a fearless critical review of the films sampled. Of these, rather more than half were produced and edited throughout by amateurs; the rest were cobbled together by firms which advertise "Let us edit and title your holiday movies."

The report deals first with the most important aspect of amateur movie-making:

## THE SUBJECT MATTER

Many amateurs are clearly of the opinion that this is of minor importance,

their chief concern being to demonstrate their skill at devising star-burst wipes and other trick opticals. They are preoccupied with the punctuation at the expense of the story. Too little care is being taken in *planning* the film. Amateurs in the main do not yet recognize that they must choose between enjoying a holiday and making holiday movies. *They cannot do both.* Satisfactory results are rarely obtained unless the whole fortnight is scripted beforehand. As usual, many potentially amusing episodes—barefoot grandfathers stepping in candy floss, aunts falling flat with beach trays, cars being caught by the tide—were shockingly under-rehearsed.

There is the same tendency as in previous years to photograph holiday groups against public conveniences. Because of the fortunate summer, there were fewer shots of families playing "Monopoly" in beach huts, but where boarding-house interiors were used they again tended to be stiffly posed.

Attempts at symbolism were not always happy. To single out one example: in "Vespa Votaries" the opening shot of a slice of bread in a puddle was meant to symbolize Manchester. Immediately after this came a shot of a breakfast roll being dipped in a cup of coffee on a terrace at Sorrento, but the felicity of the contrast was marred by the fact that heavy sleet appeared to be falling.

## CORNET, CONCH AND DREAMS — Storyboard Pt X



ty Long-shot ice-cream man. Close-up cornet (from Pan young Ron to cornet's shadow. Bunuel? Close-up young feet. Eisenstein's shooting from behind young below, Orson Welles?) Back project from papier-mâché mock-up at "The type sh Larches".



Commendably, many amateurs have equipped themselves with a home-made "dolly," enabling more effective pictures to be taken of beach rescues, blondes on lilos, mock auctions, housey-house schools and comedians opening fêtes. This device can be transported on the car roof, instead of the pile of deckchairs normally carried for the purpose of cheating seaside resorts.

It is evident that more and more cars are now equipped with a windscreens camera-mounting, as used by motor rallyists, and the tendency is to make excessive use of this facility. A great deal of screen time is being wasted with long sequences showing the backs of furniture vans, followed by the final desperate act of overtaking; also by close-ups of traffic lights changing. Far preferable is a short, almost throwaway, sequence in which the driver hurls his family with apparent nonchalance round the more spectacular bends on (say) the Stelvio—so much more effective than any plodding documentary on the ten-mile queue outside Honiton.

#### TITLING

Among the most frequently encountered titles were "Paradise for Two," "Sunlit Shores," "French Leave," "Woodland Adventure" and "Our Holidays." These were found on two-thirds of the films under review, the title-boards being supplied ready-made by dealers. Non-standard titles

included "Paradise for Two Adults and Four Children," "Under the Butlin Flag," "With Cook's to the Casbah," "Sous Les Toits d'Ostende" and "Through Five Cathedrals in a Bikini."

All movies about Venice were entitled "Venetian Blind," the titles being mounted on the slats of a blind which then opened to reveal the Grand Canal. A film about Holland had its titles printed, not always successfully, on cheese, as did one about the Cheddar Gorge. A Yorkshire travelogue was indifferently titled in gravy on Yorkshire pudding.

It is apparent that many amateurs are excessively addicted to the use of outworn sub-titles remembered from silent films. "Help! HELP!! HELP!!!" figured in far too many comic bathing sequences. It should be remembered that no one can manage Saul Bass titling but Saul Bass.

#### CREDITS

Conventions governing credits are imperfectly understood. An example typifying many was: "Presenting THE HIGGINBOTHAMS and BONZO in 'BLANKENBERGHE OR BUST' with Cousin Ethel and Uncle George." The credits should, of course, read: "Presenting THE HIGGINBOTHAMS in 'BLANKENBERGHE OR BUST' With COUSIN ETHEL and UNCLE GEORGE and Introducing BONZO the Wonder Dog." Offence is thus avoided and there is a handsome sop to Bonzo.

In most films this year there were far too many credits to tradespeople. "Roof-Rack Kindly Lent by Bluebell Garage" may save 21s. in hiring fees, but it looks mean. On the other hand, "Picnic Equipment by Fortnum's" is an indication of status and many amateurs prefer to run this credit even though Fortnum's knock nothing off the bill. Again noticeable was the tendency to wave cigarette packets, not always casually, in front of the camera, presumably in the hope that the manufacturers would send a free six-months' supply. This is not ethical.

#### CONCLUSION

Miscellaneous faults included these:

Far too many films opened with a shot of the family swallowing travel-sickness pills. The audience should not be saddled with the worry of wondering whether these will be effective.

Too many illegible French menus were displayed.

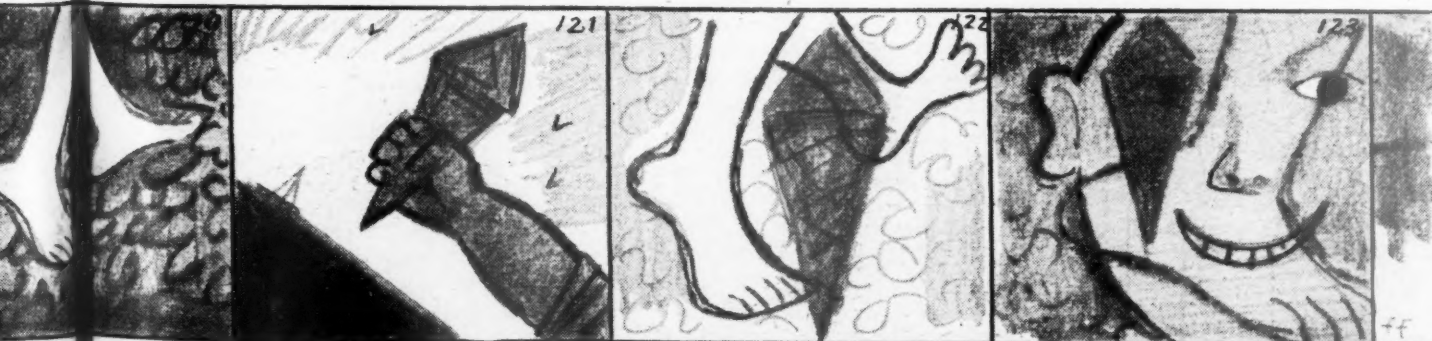
Clock golf sequences tended to pall after the first fifty or sixty strokes.

Vulgar gestures by passers-by appear to have been overlooked.

Rail travel sequences frequently lacked a close-up of the locomotive wheels in motion.

Shots of wash-day on caravan sites tended to degenerate, consciously or not, into burlesques of whiter-than-white advertisements on television.

a p XXIII



young Ron's Close-up tilt shot, Mix to Close-up feet, running. Cornet superimposed. Vadim or something.

Close-up Ron. Cross-cut Fa frames 118, 121, 122. Kind of Clair-Asquith.

# First Stop at Westminster

By CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS

"I'M always glad of an opportunity to pay a visit to Barchester," said the Privy Councillor, "and I cannot imagine any errand which could bring me more gladly to Barchester than to ask you to return, as I am sure that you will return, at the head of the poll next Thursday my old friend Mr. David Proudie. We want young men at Westminster. There is no one who knows that better than we old stagers, and David Proudie is exactly the type of young man that we want. I can assure you that we know all about him and his speeches. We have been watching him and we will promise to use him when he comes to the House."

Loud applause burst out from the elderly women supporters who filled some two-thirds of the seats in the front of the hall. A dark-haired, fanatical young man, chewing a cigarette, who, disdaining a seat, lounged against the hot-water pipes at the back said with a sneer out of the corner of his mouth "What about Sumatra?" The Privy Councillor, ignoring the interruption, swept on with his oratory.

"Rattling good speech of yours, David," said the Privy Councillor to David Proudie after the meeting. "We want to hear speeches like that in the

House of Commons. You've got it in the bag, my boy. Remember to look me up when you get there. I'll look after you." And the Privy Councillor got into his car and swept off to the next constituency.

David was moved, and when on Thursday he stood on the balcony of the Town Hall and faced the cheering crowds below him he was truly sincere when he said "This is the proudest moment of my life."

The week after he arrived at Westminster. It was only about tea-time when they had finished electing the Speaker. The Members all trooped out of the Chamber. Everyone else appeared to have a friend to greet or a meeting to attend. No one spoke to David. He stood alone, feeling excessively awkward. The only person who seemed prepared to speak to him was the policeman in the Central Lobby. He asked the policeman the way to the Smoking-room.

"Round to the right and straight through St. Stephen's Hall," said the policeman.

David followed the direction and found himself in the street. Refusing to admit defeat, he returned to the Central Lobby and repeated his question.

"Sorry," said the policeman. "Round to the left and then first on the right and you will find it."

David obeyed again and this time landed up in the lavatory. Tears in his eyes, he went back to the Central Lobby again.

"It's the Smoking-room I'm asking for," he said in slightly more frigid tones.

"Oh, the Smoking-room," said the policeman. "You can't go there, you know. That's only for Members."

"But I am a Member," said David.

"Oh, you are a Member," said the policeman. "I beg your pardon, sir. I didn't know you were a Member. Round to the left and straight through."

David made his way into the Smoking-room, and there he saw the Privy Councillor, seated on a sofa reading the *Evening Standard*. He went up to him with a smile.

"A pot of tea and two rounds of toast," said the Privy Councillor without looking up.

"But—" David began.

"A pot of tea and two rounds of toast," repeated the Privy Councillor.

"But I'm not a waiter," said David. "I'm a Member."

The Privy Councillor looked up.

"Oh, you're a Member, are you? Oh, yes." He looked at David again. "Didn't I speak for you somewhere last week? In Worcestershire, wasn't it?"

"No, in Barsetshire," said David.

"Oh, in Barsetshire, was it?" said the Privy Councillor. "One speaks at so many places. I can never can get these north country constituencies clear from one another. Well, you'll get used to it here in time. People usually do. I should not think of speaking for two or three months if I were you. That's the advice I always give to new Members."

And catching the eye of the real waiter he repeated his order, "A pot of tea and two rounds of toast," and returned to the *Evening Standard*.

☆

"LOUNGE SUIT (three seater) Dunlopillo cushions, good condition essential."

The Windsor, Slough and Eton Express  
Ideal for Summit.



"Eh, Dupont! Get a load of that wrist!"

A series defining moments of crisis and redirection in private lives

# turning point



## A Good Year for Spies

By Philip Oakes

THE first turning point in my life loomed up one wet, winter night in Staffordshire, when my brother who was starring in a local production of *The Desert Song* tripped over his cloak and plunged like a comet into the orchestra pit of the Theatre Royal, Hanley.

I was eight years old and I wanted to die. Until that moment I had dreams of becoming a singer myself. But the sight of the Red Shadow grovelling among the tympani, while the Light Operatic Society belted out "The Riff's Song," put a stop to all that. There were more dignified ways of making a living.

The difficulty lay in finding them. It was not eagerness I lacked but a sense of direction. Advertisements which asked "Have You a Grasshopper Mind?" were composed expressly for me. I went for interviews. Pipe-smoking men behind huge desks toyed with their blotters when I applied for a job. I could almost see their thoughts, bobbing in balloons above their well-brushed heads. "Poor type. Indecisive. Tell him to get a haircut." They were probably right. Someone had made the mistake of hinting that I looked like Rupert Brooke, and afterwards I visited the barber once every three months.

This interlude ended when I joined the Army, and for once there was no dithering about it. I admired the posters which said it was a man's life, and as it happened conscription was in force at the time. To everyone's surprise it turned out rather well. Nobody shot at me, and the only blood that I spilled belonged to a man who

trimmed his nails each morning with a bayonet. Hygiene was important, even in the desert, he said, and if people couldn't look where they were going, they could bloody well find another billet.

The war had been over for slightly more than a year when I was posted to Cairo as a writer on an Army magazine. It was exciting, but odd. The Army had withdrawn to the Canal Zone; the shoe-blacks were going bankrupt; and the small, remaining corps of service personnel stayed close to their hotels, while students celebrated the end of the régime by burning trams beneath the windows.

It was a good year for spies. Some of them were quite frank about their business, and it was simple enough to spot the others. The American spies did most of their business at the race-course at Heliopolis. They wore beige linen suits and always backed the wrong horses. A solitary Russian who looked

like Mr. Khrushchev (*could it have been Mr. Khrushchev?*) held court at Groppi's, where he ate an enormous walnut sundae every afternoon at four. The Egyptian spies (pro-Farouk and pro-Neguib) carried brief-cases and squabbled on street corners. Members of the British Intelligence wore trilby hats, drank at Shephard's and played tennis at the Gezira Sporting Club.

Three spies stayed at the *pension* where I was billeted. There was a mathematics tutor named Mr. Beck, who gave private lessons to girls in tight sweaters. There was an Irishman named Malloy, who commandeered the bathroom each morning and sang rebel songs in a high, sweet tenor, always ending his recital with "Brennan's on the Moor." And there was the Mystery Woman.

We did not know her name, but that only improved the mystery. She wore dark glasses and smoked black cigarettes through a long white holder. She drank brandy for breakfast and read Stendhal in French. Her room was opposite to mine, and late at night the sound of radio static filtered through the keyhole.

I had the smallest room in the *pension*. Outside it was a massive refrigerator that throbbed and clicked like a pinball machine. The nerve ends of the lift were embedded somewhere under the wardrobe. And running up the outside wall there was a fire escape, a highway at night for heavy mysterious feet, and even more mysterious cans that clattered from top to bottom, unaided by human hand. I found it all very unsettling.

"It's a hobby you need," said Malloy, "a secondary occupation. Nothing



"Isn't he house-trained yet?"





strenuous, you understand. Something to take your mind off things." He was a small, beguiling man, with a grin as sharp as a razor. "Take politics," he said, "there's an absorbing subject."

I said that politics could wait until I was out of the Army, but he shook his head. "It's now you must think of, boyo. Procrastination is dear time's waste. Take the immediate situation. It's worth anyone's while to give it study." He stroked his long nose. "There's a couple of quid to be made at it too."

We were sitting on the roof-top. A hawk swooped overhead and flew on towards the Blue Mosque. "Information," said Malloy, "that's what everyone wants. It doesn't matter a damn what the information is. There's always someone ready to buy it. Tell them the temperature's ninety in the shade and you've got a customer." He squinted speculatively at the sun. "It's all a matter of psychology. No one wants to be left out. They don't know what's important any more. Let it slip that the General has a boil on his bum and you'll wind up with a dozen other fellows, cash in hand, wanting to know which side."

It all sounded very logical. "What about the Mystery Woman?" I asked. "What's her line?"

"Food," said Malloy. "She can tell you what the Ambassador had for lunch last Tuesday week, and how many crumpets he's likely to pack away between now and Christmas." He

smacked his lips. "It's not just an army that marches on its stomach. An entire treaty can go to pot if the kebab's a bit off. It helps to know these things."

"It makes you think," I said.

"It does indeed," said Malloy. "A bright young fellow could do himself a lot of good if he put his mind to it."

He was right, of course, although espionage—even if it was only a matter of counting the number of bath-plugs in the First Secretary's bungalow—could scarcely be described as an honest profession. There was not much dignity attached to it either. I wavered. I even began to incline. But the turning point was still several weeks ahead. "I'll let you know," I said.

Time slid by. Malloy bought several new suits. The Mystery Woman's radio still crackled after dark. Mr. Beck announced that he was going to marry one of his pupils. And suddenly it was Christmas. Snow fell for the first time in thirty years, and tall, yelping men ran through the streets, catching the flakes in their hands to lick them up before they melted. We gave a party at the offices of the magazine, and because we had no ice-box, put the beer in the bath, with the cold tap running. Somehow the waste-pipe got blocked, and close to midnight the staircase cascaded like a mountain stream.

Malloy helped me to swab the floor. "Flood at the offices of Army magazine," he murmured. "Records destroyed. That's worth a couple of quid."

"What records?" I asked.

Malloy looked at me pityingly. "Any you care to name," he said. "Who's to know any different?"

I knew that the moment had arrived. "All right," I said, "let's talk this over."

We walked back through the dark streets, with a cold wind rattling the leaves of the little palm trees. The lift was out of order at the *pension*, and the cables reached up into the black shaft, furry with dust, and swaying as if someone was shaking them in a signal of distress.

We climbed the stairs and walked into a room full of policemen. A young lieutenant with a hairline moustache and a gleaming gun-belt stood up and shook Malloy's hand. "We have been waiting," he said.

After that, everything happened very quickly. Two large policemen jumped on Malloy and snapped a pair of handcuffs round his wrists. Mr. Beck appeared in the doorway with a girl pupil (not the one he was going to marry) swathed in a pink satin quilt. And the Mystery Woman's radio burst into a selection from *The Desert Song*.

I recognized my cue. "Spread the word that I've been taken," shouted Malloy. "It's worth a couple of quid." But it was too late. The turning point was behind me, and I was heading hell-for-leather towards a future where policemen carried no guns, and only very occasionally jumped on spies.

The next day Mr. Beck moved out, and the Mystery Woman spoke for the first time. It was close on midnight, and I was filching a small snack from the refrigerator when she tapped me on the shoulder. "Come and eat it in my room," she drawled. "Tell me about yourself; about your life, your loves, your Army cooking."

I hesitated for a split second, and then bolted back into my own room. Army cooking was a horrible, open secret. But it was possible that a few of the finer points were not generally known. I sat in the dark and decided to say nothing about the bully for breakfast, and the bromide in the tea. It was safer that way. It was probably loose talk that cost us the Empire.

Other writers in this series will be:

MARY ADAMS  
MALCOLM BRADBURY  
JOHN WAIN

West Side Stories

# The Quick and the Dead

*B. A. YOUNG samples the gay life in Nevada, the Sagebrush State*

**M**OTELS come in as many varieties as those well-known canned goodies. From my small experience I select as my favourite the Hal Mar Motel in Delano, Calif. (pop. 8,717, Bakersfield 30m., Fresno 70m.), where the publicity invites you to "relax in mid-Victorian atmosphere," adding in confirmation and Old English letters, "Ye Chamber Wilt Be Different From That of Thy Neighbour . . . A Deviation From Ye Usual." A motel in Los Angeles advertises "Queen-size beds." But the only motel in which I have found it possible to stay at a profit is the Westerner in Reno, Nevada.

Dusk is falling as we pull up outside the Westerner. We have chosen it because it is the first motel we have seen in Reno where only the second word of the neon-sign saying NO VACANCIES is illuminated. "Vacancies," it turns out, is an overstatement, but they have a vacancy, a big room with three beds in it for ten dollars, and as there are three of us with not much more than ten dollars to spend we accept it gratefully and Dr. Baerleiter goes into the office to sign the register.

When he comes out it is like pay-day at the factory. To each of us he distributes a bundle of gaudy literature. There is a token that can be exchanged for a packet of free nickels at the Horseshoe Club. There are tokens for free nickels at the Silver Dollar and the Club Primadonna, and also at the Primadonna a Gift Certificate. The Cal-Neva Club out-does any of these; it gives us tokens for two free drinks at the bar, a free Bingo card, and, of course, another packet of nickels. "What's more," says Dr. Baerleiter enthusiastically, "coffee in the morning is on the house."

We hurry into town ("The Greatest Little City in the West," as it describes itself on the arch across the main drag, though with so many neons everywhere the sign is almost obliterated) and into the Cal-Neva. In front, and indeed on every side, is a battery of "one-armed bandits," fruit-machines graded to accept in their maws anything from a

nickel to a silver dollar; and I may say that any other kind of dollar is looked at pretty grimly in the state of Nevada, for you cannot put a bill into a slot-machine. We make our way to the bar and order large Scotches on the rocks, and tear off our certificates to pay for them, feeling oddly shy as we do so but raising no more interest than a cat on a hearthrug. From the bar I survey the enormous salon: besides the endless fruit-machines there are six tables playing "the 21 game," one playing craps, and one roulette, besides the

Bingo game and a local relative called Keno.

Excitement overcomes me. I rush from the bar and claim my free nickels from the cashier. I put one into a machine and it rewards me impassively with ten others. I go to the roulette table and buy a dollar's-worth of five-cent chips. In ten minutes I have made \$1.35. But the wanderlust is on me; I cash in and move on to the craps, to the *vingt-et-un*, to the Bingo, to the Horse-shoe, to the Silver Dollar, to the Primadonna, and back to the bar to realize



my second chit. The gambling fever has me in its grip. By midnight I am completely broke.

Dr. Baerleiter's brother-in-law brings me coffee in bed next morning. "Tom, how much did you lose?" I ask him.

"About five dollars, I guess. Nothing lethal."

We woo the Doctor out of his heavy sleep with promises of coffee. "How much did you lose?"

"Lose?"

"Gambling."

Dr. Baerleiter makes a distasteful face over his coffee. "I don't hold with gambling," he admits. "I get no kick from it. I just came here for the divorce, I guess."

"Do you mean to say," I ask him, "you wasted all those gifts of free nickels?"

"Oh, no. I have them all in my trousers pocket." He reaches for his trousers and empties them. The nickels total \$1.70. "Actually," he says apologetically, "I got more than you guys because in one place I went to the cashier to change a dollar bill and he threw me a packet of nickels from force of habit."

Counting the drinks at the Cal-Neva at 50 cents each and the free gift at the Primadonna (which none of us actually sampled) at another 50 cents and the

free Bingo card at two bits, the Doctor has amassed \$3.45, which is 12 cents more than his share of the motel room. We leave him to pay the tip.

Pausing only to cash our travellers' cheques, not even looking into the Park Wedding Chapel (Non-Denominational) or throwing our old wedding rings into the East Truckee River, as the custom is, we drive south over the barren heights of the Geiger Pass. We pass through Carson City—and what else is there to do at Carson City?—and in no time we are in the once prodigal and now exhausted silver-mining territory and heading for the ghost town of Virginia City.

Virginia City, in the days when the Comstock Lode, the richest silver deposit ever known, was enriching the citizens of San Francisco, was a flourishing city of eleven thousand inhabitants. In 1940 its population was nine hundred and fifty. But to-day it seems to have gone a fair way back to the eleven thousand mark, for on either side of both streets is a line of glittering automobiles, and the fronts of the stores are as brightly painted as ever in the 'seventies.

"Ghost town" is a very suitable name for Virginia City. Ghosts are not dead, they are the dead who won't lie down, and Virginia City, having run out of

silver, is now making a handsome living as a show-place. Here, for example, is the Bucket of Blood saloon on the main street. "See," the proprietors implore, "the gold coin collection, Diamond Jim Brady's banquet set, Hank Monk's gold watch, Charlie Farrell's silver horseshoes, portraits and silver of Sandy Bowers and Eilley Orrum . . . pickle castors, steins and other antiques of fabulous bonanza days." (The other antiques include a portrait of Queen Victoria). Over the street, nestling under the decaying wooden arcade so familiar in aspect from a thousand Westerns, are the Suicide Table, the Delta Saloon, the Big Bonanza (full, of course, of fruit machines). Five minutes' walk takes you to Piper's Opera House, a decaying clapboard palace where once artists like Jenny Lind sang and unpopular citizens were lynched from the gallery for want of a better take-off. A queue of visitors pays half a dollar each to go in.

All these places are doing a roaring trade. We enter the Bucket of Blood, expecting the barman to call "Howdy, pardner!" and slide a bottle of whisky along the bar; but he only asks which brand I prefer and slides me a couple of books of matches. Dr. Baerleiter says we must go see the cemetery, and we go; other visitors compete with us in removing ornamental bits of gravestone for their rockeries in Santa Barbara and Palo Alto. In no other city I have ever seen are the dead doing so well.

Our last port of call in Nevada is the Pine Nut Lodge, a small wayside café a mile from the State line where we go for a beer. There are six fruit-machines, each named after a well-known gangster. (One is simply labelled *Internal Revenue Officer*.) Behind the counter, prizes in a "numbers game" are a flick-knife and a Colt forty-five. The gentle lady behind the counter assures me that it is a real Colt, not plastic, in good order and requiring no licence. I do not win it . . . and damned if a dozen miles further on we are not held up by Indians.

They are good Indians. They have come in their jeep to warn us that there is a delay on the road due to blasting operations. To tell the truth I would never have known they were Indians at all if someone hadn't said so. They look just like anyone else working for the highway authority.



"I'm afraid we're not regular churchgoers, Vicar, but we like to keep in touch."





### Cars Have Britain In Tow

THE British motor-car industry is doing so well that it has become dangerously essential to the well-being of the whole economy. It has developed a voracious appetite for steel. It is the mainstay of a large section of the engineering industry. Its retinue of accessories, from tyres to electrical goods and textiles, threads its way through large parts of the economy. It has become one of the pillars on which rests the British balance of payments. It is now the greatest single dollar earner in the whole sterling area.

It can be said with confidence that the expansion of this industry has provided the stimulus behind much of the recent recovery of British industry. The question naturally arises how long this boom, on which so much depends, can last.

At the moment it shows absolutely no signs of waning. The industry, month by month, is notching up new records of production, and if we are to believe its spokesmen "we ain't seen nothing yet." That "nothing" is quite impressive. We have recently had glittering profit and dividend figures from such diverse groups as Fords, Rootes and Rover. Whether six-monthly or yearly figures they all show records in the turnover of business and, for some, in the level of profits. The latest production figures, and the promise of the gleaming models now flaunting their attractions at Earl's Court, suggest that records will continue to reel off the assembly lines for some time to come. From the British Motor Corporation comes the awe-inspiring claim that production will have increased by anything up to 45 per cent in the present financial year, and that it will have doubled in two years.

On the Stock Exchange motor shares have been booming, and given the promise of still better profit and dividend figures to be published next year they are likely at worst to hold their present prices and at best to do much better than that.

The one tiny cloud in this blue sky, and it is one which shows the tremendous strength of the industry, is that some manufacturers have been running short of the sheet steel they need. That, however, is a marginal problem. It has affected Vauxhall more than other manufacturers because the prolonged steel strike in America has caused a complete suspension in the supplies of American steel on which this firm partly depends.

The British steel manufacturers who cater for the motor industry, including Steel Co. of Wales and John Summers, have been working full out, and when their figures for 1959 are published they are likely to justify the remarkable increase that has recently occurred in the price of these and other steel shares.

The criticism of the steel industry for not being able to meet the full

requirements for particular types of steel is grossly misplaced. The production capacity for thin sheet is steadily expanding. Two new strip mills are to be built, one in South Wales by Richard Thomas Baldwins, one in Scotland by Colvilles. These and the further expansion in the Steel Co. of Wales and John Summers output, will soon catch up with the rising normal demand for this type of steel. To suggest that the steel industry should at all times be able to meet demand, even at its seasonal peaks, is to ask it to maintain some productive capacity that would be idle nine-tenths of the time. That may be the way in which a nationalized industry can be run but not an industry that has to make ends meet without Exchequer assistance and to live in a highly competitive world.

— LOMBARD LANE

### In the Country



### Charmers

MOST villages have, hidden away behind the council cottages, an individual with an aloof nature and slight arthritis who can charm away warts. Discouraged by the rising tide of Puritanism, he was not at hand to put in the necessary spade work on Oliver Cromwell, but he popped back at the Restoration and has stayed ever since. What is not so usual is the charmer of animal diseases, the mysterious disperser of ringworm, mastitis and hæmorrhages, and other intractable ailments that beset stock.

Payment to charmers must never be made or suggested, nor may presents be given or favours done. Thanks can only be rendered by lying low and asking no questions. Powers are handed down not through blood but by word of mouth, generally from man to woman and vice versa. An old woman charmer will confide her magic to a young man of whom she is fond or whom she regards as a worthy recipient. Charmers never work against vets. They operate only when vets have abandoned hope.

Twelve miles from us, over on the county border, live some farmers, new to the job, who breed the kind of sheep

that tend to give birth to triplets and who are therefore more than ordinarily liable to dangerous hæmorrhages. In their first few lambing seasons they lost more ewes than they cared to think about. One day their vet, despairing of saving a life, suggested, you might try ringing up Mr. Sutton at Crump Mowerby. And saying what? Saying you have got a ewe that's dying. They did, and the ewe's hæmorrhage stopped five minutes later. They did this on several occasions. It failed only once. The hæmorrhages might have been going to stop anyway. There are plenty of explanations.

Another farmer took over a farm with old cowsheds. Spring arrived, and a dozen of his cows developed ringworm. He and his wife scraped diligently and unsuccessfully all that summer. Next spring the same thing happened. This will keep on, their vet told them gloomily, until you pull down these old cowsheds and build new ones. Of course, he added, you could try ringing up Mr. Brooks.

Mr. Brooks was a substantial farmer who ran a Humber Snipe and farmed five hundred good acres a couple of valleys away. How many cows were affected, he wanted to know. Twenty-three, they told him. A day or two later they noticed that three more cows had ringworm. It seemed a foolishness to trouble Mr. Brooks again. A fortnight later the original twenty-three cows were quite well. The three late developers went on suffering the whole summer.

These are the facts. The conclusions you draw from them will be your own. Just don't come asking me who the charmers are.

— PENELOPE HUNT

## Toby Competitions

### No. 85—Westminster United

**M**R. MACMILLAN has chosen his new team. Write a "character," on school magazine lines, for not more than four of the players.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive a book token to the value of one guinea. Entries by first post on Friday, November 6, to **TOBY COMPETITION No. 85, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.**

### Report on Competition No. 82 (Pointing the Moral)

"Money is a good servant but a bad master" was the maxim competitors were invited to illustrate in a fable for adolescents. Many amateur *Aesops* stuck to the traditional form, clothing animals, birds and beasts with speech to impart advice surreptitiously. Several modernists introduced juke boxes and squares.

The winner was

H. P. BONSER,  
27 GARTON END ROAD,  
PETERBOROUGH  
NORTHANTS

for this anecdote in the old form:

Ali was planting a fig tree when the Caliph of the Faithful rode by. "Who plants figs plants for his heirs, Grandfather," he called. "Oh, Blessed of Allah, permit me to bring you the first fruits of this tree," Ali answered. The Caliph jocularly agreed. In due time Ali presented a basket of figs. "These are indeed delectable figs, Venerable

One," the Caliph said and ordered Ali be given a chicken stuffed with gold coins. Ali buried the gold in his hut, but could not sleep for fear of thieves. Within the year he died. His great grandson found the gold and, making the money his servant, became a rich merchant.

Runners up were:

A young ass in the service of a wealthy Indian prince said "Sir, should you not think more seriously upon the profitable use of your money?" "You are right!" answered the prince, and piling his gold upon the ass's back he set out for the nearest city, at which the poor animal arrived exhausted. In that city lived a designing widow, who, seeing the prince's wealth, resolved to marry him. Her design accomplished, she said "And now you must get rid of this ridiculous money-loving ass." "Sir," remarked the ass to the sorrowing prince, "we made money our master and it has brought us a cruel mistress. Better had we allowed it to remain our obedient servant." —G. J. Blundell, Littlewood, East Malling, Kent

There was once a flighty young rabbit who loved rock and roll and was learning how to sand the burrow and prepare lettuce. She was soon too tired even to enthuse over the latest ear-styles, and resolved to escape drudgery by marrying money. She ensnared a wealthy old buck, lord of many warrens, and was married without delay. Alas! she produced a regular litter of young, so that her days were even busier and her fur coat and magnificent jewels remained unworn. But the old buck sat daily in the sun collecting his rents and smoking his corn-cob pipe with his cony cronies.—Mrs. R. E. Burke, *The Angel Hotel, Topcliffe, Nr. Thirsk, Yorkshire*

Sam Squirrel, during a nut famine, found a tree heavily laden with nuts. Secretly

amassing a huge hoard, he spent a luxurious winter being attended hand and foot by his hungrier brethren. The following summer, afraid lest his remaining stock be stolen, he spent his days guarding it, and to conceal the source of his prolific supplies he brought in replenishments only after dark. Due to these day and night exertions he fell ill and had to call Doctor Bushytail. "You're nuts!" said the doctor, taking most of Sam's wealth as a consultation fee and thus shocking him back to sanity. "Nuts will never drive me nuts again," vowed Sam. And they never did.—J. J. Harrison, 9 Wolsey Avenue, Selby, Yorkshire

A certain man of low estate, having served several masters to indifferent effect, fell destitute. He resolved to venture upon the land, and attached himself to a skilled farmer, who liked his appearance. Steadily, by endurance and observation, he began to increase his earnings and to bring repute to these lands—to which he succeeded upon his good patron's death. Meanwhile, a friend of this man's chanced of a sudden to win a fabulous sum in a vast football pool. But alas! these tumbling unusual pounds demanded to be employed. Evil counselled, overthrown by his singular success, he abandoned his occupation. Deaf to charity, parsimony and sagacious usury, he plunged into new excesses and met—cold penury.—Herbert W. Thompson, 58 Copse Avenue, West Wickham, Kent

Once all earthly creatures inhabited the sea. Among these was a colony of ants who, for some inscrutable reason, were known by such names as M'kidney and M'scapula. These ants lived within the sea's surf. One day a passing god dropped a box of matches, which chanced to land by M'foot and M'shinbone and their close friend M'knee. The latter suggested a boat be made from the box, and attempted—approximately 50 times—to make a mast from one of the matches, but each time the box overbalanced and tossed him into the water. At the fiftieth splash M'clavicle turned to M'foot and said "You know, M'knee is a good surf-ant but a bad master."—G. A. Copley, 3 Aston Somerville, Nr. Broadway, Worcs.

A Debtor lay sick in bed when Death came in. "Have you come to pay my debt?" asked the Debtor. "Not likely!" said Death and went away again. Later the Debtor met Death while crossing the road. "What about paying my debt?" he called. "Not — likely!" said Death. Again the Debtor saw Death in the distance and shouted to him: "My debt is bigger than ever!" but Death did not even look round. The Creditor saw the Debtor talking to Death and thought: "He will give Death my money and I shall never see it back—the worry will kill me." And it did.—D. M. Ramsay, *The Woodlands, Navenby, Lincoln*

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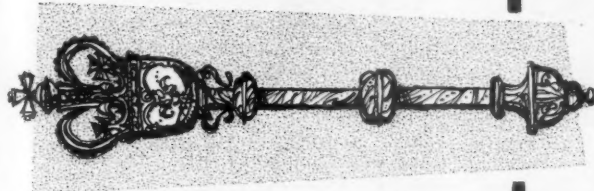
"Except some incidents of pickpocketing, lifting sundry articles from the stalls and misbehaviour to girls, which were promptly detected and the culprits handed over to the police officer on duty, nothing untowards happened."—*The Assam Tribune*

Crime slump.



"One lump for you, one for me, and one for the National Coal Board."

## Essence



## of Parliament



Sir Harry Hylton-Foster

NEVER has the House of Commons been more of an iceberg—in the sense of nine-tenths of it being out of sight—than over the election of the Speaker. One sensible suggestion has emerged out of the controversy—it came from Mr. Gaitskell—and that is that in future Speakers should try to resign in the middle instead of at the end of a Parliament. There seems everything to be said for this. Then, if reasonable notice is given, there can be proper canvassing and consultation of all parties, which, with all the will in the world, seems hardly possible if the election of a new Speaker is the first task of a new Parliament. But, apart from Mr Gaitskell's suggestion, all was confusion. There has never been a Labour Speaker. The Labour party behaved with commendable restraint and generosity when they refused to turn out Mr. Speaker Clifton Brown in 1945 and put in a nominee of their own. There was a great deal to be said for it that they should be allowed a turn. But who was to be the man?

The Conservatives could hardly be expected merely to allow the Labour party to have the nomination. Mr. Gaitskell admitted as much. On the other hand it does at first sight seem that the Conservatives were perhaps a bit rough in suggesting that it must be either Sir Frank Soskice or nobody—Soskice *aut nemo*. Could there not have been at least consultations about other candidates? It seemed in fact pretty clear that Mr. Butler and Mr. Macmillan

would have been willing enough to look for another candidate, but they had an initial certainty that all the Conservatives would support Sir Frank. They could not be certain that they would support another candidate, and they did not want to begin a new Parliament with half the Conservatives voting along with the whole Labour party for a Labour candidate and half the Conservatives voting for somebody else. They preferred, if necessary, to start it with a row. So Labour has lost another chance of the Speakership and the years roll on.

*Eheu fugaces, Soskice, Soskice.*

*Labuntur anni.*

Indeed the Labour conduct was rather less intelligible than the Conservative. The decision of the Labour party meeting was, it seems, to vote against Sir Harry but not in favour of anybody else. Labour back benchers went into the Chamber imagining that this would be done. To their surprise they heard Mr. Gaitskell announce that he had discovered that a purely negative vote would be out of order and therefore, since it was too late to produce another candidate, he would not divide the House. But, since such a candidate would certainly have been defeated and his proposal would have been a mere act of protest, it is hard to see why any respectable name would not have done. Many people are glad enough that there was no division, but it was possible to sympathize with a Labour back benchers who thought that he and his pals had been "a little bit tricked."

It was, to tell the truth and with all respect to the press, not very much of a row, though, if not, no thanks were due to Sir James Duncan and Sir Robert Cary who proposed and seconded Sir Harry Hylton-Foster. They seemed to have come down to Westminster prepared to drop all the bricks there were, unless indeed—which does not seem probable—like the Duchess's baby, they only did it to annoy because they knew it teases. By the time that Sir James had got through with telling the House that the Speakership used to be a party matter but that now it was settled by consultation and with Sir Robert adding that it was a vulgar error to imagine that this election was "a mere formality" the Labour benches were becoming visibly more zoological. Mr. Gaitskell poured some rather clever oil on these troubled waters, registering protest, making it clear that he had no personal quarrel with Sir Harry and then switching off to his sensible and constructive suggestion which Mr. Macmillan was able to endorse. But the real hero of the day—a most happy omen—was Sir Harry himself. By a felicitous though—an unpremeditated afterthought as he said—he lightened it all up by telling how in the sixteenth century the Speakership used to be thought a perquisite of the Solicitor-General and how the tradition was broken in 1601 because of a Solicitor-General who was thought to be "too lawyer-like and uncouth." He put up a very bonny fight when his proposer and seconder came to drag him protesting to the Chair. There was a moment when it almost looked as if he might win and Mr. Nabarro, flaunting the brave banner of "Nabarro again," may have thought that the turn might at last come to him.

— PERCY SOMERSET

### EXHIBITIONS

"Punch in the Cinema." Kingswood Odeon, Bristol.

"Punch in the Theatre." Middlesbrough Little Theatre and Chesterfield Civic Theatre.

"Punch with Wings." Exhibition Hall, Queens Buildings, London Airport Central.

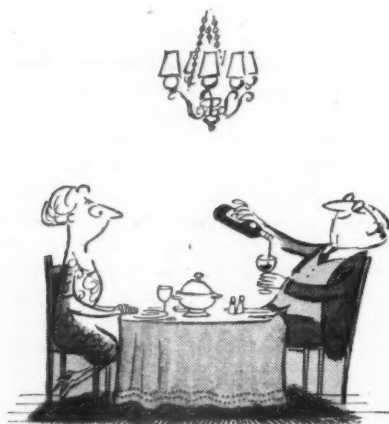
For South African readers—"Punch in the Cinema." Association of Arts Gallery, Burg Street, Cape Town, November 23rd, for two weeks.



## Preliminary Canter

UNCLE said he had bought tickets for the annual village Lifeboat Dance and we must go down. Seven-and-six each, including buffet. Dinner jackets or short evening dresses, as it was Rusham's big social event of the year. My daughter was about to emerge on a startled world. This would be the perfect milieu to test her paces.

My son, having outgrown his first dinner-jacket, telephoned us at Rusham after lunch on the day of the dance. Catastrophe. The Man said he had to leave a deposit of five pounds or no hired clothes. Where, in one hour before the train went, with no cheque-book, could my son raise a fiver? He had his fare and three-and-fourpence. I asked to speak to the Man. In sugary tones, offering all sorts of splendid references, I begged him to relent.



FOR  
WOMEN



Probably exhausted from listening, he agreed at the second lot of pips. My son would be correctly dressed to-night.

We were all ready to go when my daughter suddenly got nerves. She said she looked hideous. Her dress was awful. She hadn't enough make-up. No one would dance with her, and if we thought she wanted to spend her evening dancing with her brother and a couple of old fogies (my husband and uncle blanched) she didn't. Crying loudly, she ran upstairs.

In the end I changed to a sleek dress, lent my daughter my full petticoats so that she fairly crackled with paper nylon, patched up her face with plenty of every cosmetic on the dressing table, and we set out twenty minutes late. I hoped the lights would be dim. My daughter did look hideous.

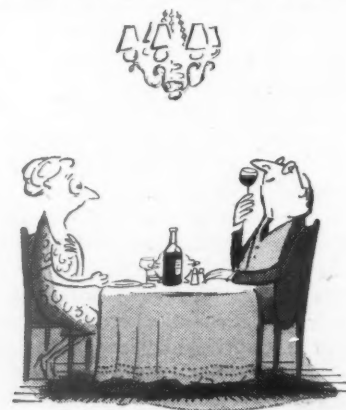
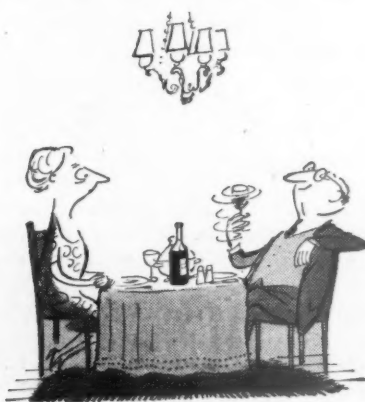
The lights were dim. My son met an old school friend as soon as we arrived, and they immediately exchanged sisters. My daughter began to look better. Free, my husband and Uncle searched for the bar, growing rapidly more worried until they learnt the form. You brought your own flasks, which you left in your car or the cloak-room. You took out the glasses of lemonade or orangeade supplied free at the buffet, and fixed them. My husband shot off for the

cottage and returned five minutes later to ask Uncle for the latchkey, muttering bitterly that Uncle had no org. and that how he had ever attained high rank was beyond comprehension.

Uncle bought six tombola tickets, hoping to get back the bottle of excellent sherry he had donated. He won three handkerchiefs with coloured borders.

My husband returned beaming happily. He and Uncle carried out to the car two glasses of orangeade and one of lemonade. They returned with, they said, gin and lemon, rum and orange and rye and orange, which they set on the table.

My son had attended a few dances already. With this experience I was surprised to see that he was now a wall-flower, sitting unhappily at our table and gazing into space. My daughter had not yet sat down at all. I pushed my son into a Paul Jones, which luckily started up just then, but he seemed singularly unskilful. He always managed to get a very young sister or a mum. His expression grew more unhappy and wan, so when he came back I pushed a laced orangeade into his hand. He said he wished he was a girl. All you had to do then was to sit around and someone asked you to dance. Looking about me, I pointed out to him that a lot of girls



were waiting for just that to happen. Wouldn't he help them out? He said no.

Uncle danced for some time with a rather nice-looking young female he had met in the Paul Jones, but he was very depressed when he came back to the table. He said he had just found out he was at Cranwell with her father.

My son suddenly brightened up. Following his gaze, I saw an obvious brother and sister actually jiving. My son adores jive. As soon as the music stopped he went over, caution thrown to the winds. He started an animated conversation with the girl, and her brother retired into the shadows.

My daughter came back for a brief rest. She had drunk half a tumbler of orangeade before anyone remembered it was not what it seemed. She said it was very good, and was off again in no time with a new young man. My son was jiving like one possessed. By his slightly dazed expression he was either sent or in love again. I thoroughly enjoyed the rest of the evening, which got brighter and brighter until one o'clock, when we all stood for "The Queen."

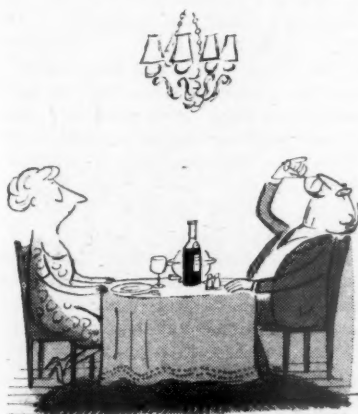
Coming out into the starlit night, her cheeks flushed with excitement, my daughter told me she was going to a cinema to-morrow with my son's friend, and two other young men had asked for her telephone number at home.

I need worry no further.

— DIANA CHILDE



**Economy Hint**  
"WOMEN WHO SMOKE HAVE  
LIGHTER CHILDREN"  
*Glasgow Herald*



## A Letter from Paris

*Alison Adburgham replies to Phyllis Heathcote*

**M**Y DEAR PHYLLIS,—Cast your mind back to a blazing day in late July, sitting on the window sill of the Bellman bar: inside, in the dim coolth, talk about the Balmain collection we had just been seeing; outside, on the sunny pavement, Miki Sekers telling us of a theatre he was building at his home in Cumberland—a sort of little Glyndebourne to bring good music and drama to the Lake District. In Paris that day it seemed a remote and visionary project; but the Theatre at Rosehill has materialized, with the most consequential list of trustees, and Dame Peggy Ashcroft opening it. They've had Elizabeth Söderström and Kerstin Meyer, and Emlyn Williams giving his Dickens and Dylan Thomas readings, and the winter programme includes Yehudi and Hepzibah Menuhin, Annie Fischer, John Gielgud, Joyce Grenfell. Also Bernard Miles and Josephine Wilson in a recital of English Poetry and Prose—Religious, Rural, Comic and Improper.

We went up to see T. S. Eliot's play *The Cocktail Party* by the Oxford Playhouse Company, and people had come from extraordinarily far and wide. The farthest-comer in the Sekers' house-party was from Paris—by a happy coincidence, your dear friend and distinguished fashion critic Mr. Jan Friedlander. At dinner before the theatre and supper after there were guests from Anglesey, Lancashire, Northumberland, Yorkshire; but the

main purpose of the theatre is for the people of the locality. It's built just inside the Rosehill gates, in the fold of a hill; ship-lap and green Cumberland slates, cows yearning over the hedges, sea in the distance. There was an old barn, but by an Act of Providence it collapsed early on in the building operations, so they started afresh with no Tudor temptations such as beams and whitewash. The result is an entirely urban little jewel box, with décor by Oliver Messel. The walls of the foyer and bar are lined with silk from the West Cumberland Silk Mills, the chairs olive green velvet, gilt Chippendale mirrors. Even the cloak-rooms (both L. and G.) have French wallpapers and boudoiresque fittings. As to the audience, their evening chic puts the capitals to shame... it's not nothing that a chandelier has been lit in Cumberland for the arts and elegances while the London theatre keeps going on confluences of coach-loads at whodunits, farces and musicals.

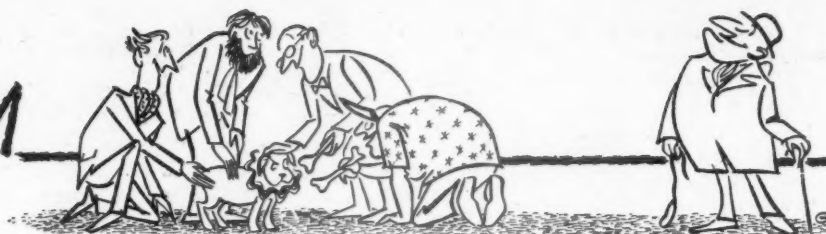
Otherwise I have little news. The *Comité du Bon Gout Français* has been over to present their *Coupe d'Or* to two English ready-to-wear makers, Dereta and Rembrandt. Previous gold cup winners have included Elizabeth Arden, the Paris Opéra, and the *Comédie Française*, so our wholesalers can consider themselves in the very best of *bon gout*.

As ever,

ALISON



# CRITICISM



## BOOKING OFFICE

### In Youth is Sadness

**The Happiest Days.** G. F. Lamb. *Michael Joseph*, 18/-

**The Lore and Language of School-children.** Iona and Peter Opie. *O.U.P.*, 35/-

IT is right for teachers and youth workers to like children, but should they like childhood? Once it was an age of sin and of purgation. Then came the romantic idea of childhood as a slow retreat from heaven. The longer it was prolonged before the child was launched into the miseries of adult responsibility the better. Adults were expected, indeed, to be prepared to sacrifice themselves utterly to the young. During the last generation the dear old pendulum has swung back and "unadult" has become a term of reproach. Married couples have been easily convinced that the best environment for growth is one in which the fully grown express themselves and enjoy life.

If it is true that the nature of a thing

is to be found in its fullest development—and Aristotle hinted as much—then Man is most human when most mature, and childhood becomes an unavoidable baddish patch. The child compared with the adult is a cripple physically, a moron intellectually and a crook morally, and the sooner it grows up the better, though the process ought to be made as pleasant as possible, partly because it will thereby be speeded up. Children have to be taught to be kind and honest and versatile as they have to be taught to play.

Mr. Lamb, who wrote some good educational polemics under the pseudonym "Balaam," has picked out from school histories and lives of headmasters and autobiographies an entertaining collection of facts about the tougher sides of education—tortured new boys, the drone of Latin grammar, fantastic floggings, barrings-out, savage fights and dreary chapel services. He also quotes the odd detail to show that bullying to the point of causing suicide still goes on. This is a very good scissors-and-paste book with a serious

purpose lurking behind the grim smile. However, at all periods there were pupils of the gentler sort. Byron, for example, though supporting a scheme for blowing up the Headmaster of Harrow with gunpowder, restrained his chums from setting the schoolroom on fire, pointing to the names of Old Harrovians carved on the panelling.

The Opies have now organized an elaborate nation-wide collection of children's customs, traditions and rhymes. Some of their facts about the preservation of Elizabethan verses on new housing estates and the speed with which topical verse is diffused are extraordinary. How unutterably thin nine-tenths of what children commit to memory is, though there seems to be some gain in word-music and fantasy north of the Trent. The repetitive riddles, the practical jokes, the pointless puns belong to the compulsive boredom of the mass mind. It is odd that when children have often quite a delicate comic sense, and respond to fresh and amusing descriptive language, they will force one another into behaving like a studio audience that has taken over the stage.

The Opies, who are folklorists and historians rather, I imagine, than psychologists, do not submit their fascinating material to much analysis, except topographical and chronological, though they provide plenty for workers in other disciplines to use. It would be interesting to know more about the process by which the repeating of the lore is made a condition of acceptance by the group. My own impression is that the ritual insults and derisive verses and lack-lustre punning often give no personal satisfaction and would willingly be dispensed with if somebody else would make the first move. The impulse behind formal fights, for example, is often purely literary.

However, these are rather theoretical responses to two volumes crammed with exciting detail. I will quote one oddment from each—Vaughan of Harrow disliked the Second Master and made him use second-hand birches: at St. Peter's, York, on November 5 they make a bonfire but burn no guy. Guy

## THESE LOOKS SPEAK VOLUMES

A Panorama of Publishers



6. VICTOR GOLLANCZ

BORN 1893. Became a publisher via St. Paul's School, New College, teaching at Repton, work with the Independent Liberals and with the late Seebohm Rowntree. After a period with Benn Brothers set up his own firm in 1927. Since then his famous monochrome book-jackets have lent unexpected distinction to the idea of the yellow press. Has led, inspired or shared in innumerable humanitarian campaigns and committees, succouring Chinese and Arabs, saving Germans from each other, Britons from Capital Punishment and the world from Atomic Bombs. A prolific pamphleteer, anthologist and autobiographer, and, they say, a very stimulating listener.



Fawkes went to school there and "it is not thought good form to burn the effigy of an old boy."

— R. G. G. PRICE

### NEW NOVELS

**Isolation.** Jerzy Peterkiewicz. Heinemann, 16/-

**The Cool World.** Warren Miller. Secker and Warburg, 15/-

**Eating People is Wrong.** Malcolm Bradbury. Secker and Warburg, 18/-

**Left of Centre.** Paul Johnson. Macgibbon and Kee, 15/-

ORIGINALITY is not enough: what matters is success. Sometimes this comes from giving freshness to what everyone had thought was a worn-out mode and sometimes it comes from doing something which has never been done before; but the flop that is "unusual" is traditionally treated more gently than the flop that is hackneyed. *Isolation* is strenuously original. The elaborate games of make-believe played by the part-Turkish freelance spy and his South American mistress, the teasing hints of the activities of his dead wife, the theoretical passages about the isolation of citizens in cities and spies in spying and lovers in loving are left as they were when the book was designed, not compounded. It is, to be brutal, the kind of book that it would not be surprising to find had been patterned on a little-known symphony or a chess game or the dimensions of the Great Pyramid. The good bits, the flashes of invention and observation, the passages when the narrative suddenly begins to move and grip, arouse high hopes that are continually dashed by the writer's retreat into a private world.

*The Cool World*, a first-person narrative by a coloured boy who is a gang boss in Harlem, is the kind of thing that has been done before. Mr. Miller simply does it better. His efficiency, which is his servant not his master, does not prevent his being toughly compassionate or closely observant. His books are workmanlike, not glossy. Even at his funniest he always draws from the life. Here he is in a serious but never heavy mood. "Duke" has become real by the third page of his narrative. His idiom and spelling never get in the way but are perfectly contrived to do three things—reveal the chaos inside the boy, reveal the jungle outside him, and get on with the story of his attempts to raise enough money to buy a gun for the next fight with the rival gang.

Mr. Bradbury also does something that, at any rate at first sight, is not particularly new. *Eating People is Wrong* looks like just another novel about Faculties of English in Redbrick Universities, with literary jokes and dreadful parties and visiting lecturers and sex and loneliness and a terrible feeling of lack of direction among middle-aged liberals; but it really does try to use the novel to discuss as well as to observe and to

amuse. Mr. Bradbury has read his Amis and, surely, his Trilling; but he has taken what he needed for his own pattern. Bates, the pushful, intellectual ass, sordid and pitiful and possibly mad, who divides his teachers into those who are afraid they might miss a genius and those who judge him ruthlessly as simply below university standard and socially offensive, is a wonderful development of an established fictional type and by the end of the book emerges as a kind of highbrow Widmerpool in sweaty socks. Like Mr. de Vries, Mr. Bradbury decorates the surface of a sociological novel with the flowers of his notebook. There are some splendid jokes.

Mr. Johnson is a good political journalist who has had the idea of combining a comic novel of the stock kind with some fairly detailed contemporary French history; but the young Englishman who gets involved with comic Communists and layabouts and a millionaire's nubilissima daughter and works for a self-consciously inefficient magazine does not really live in the same world as the Senators whose snatches of conversation just before the de Gaulle coup are overheard at a party. If Mr. Johnson had simply written reminiscences of his own Parisian experiences he would probably have been more entertaining.

— R. G. G. P.

**Marcel Proust. Vol. I.** George D. Painter. Chatto and Windus, 30/-

The chief discoveries in this "definitive" biography are Proust's considerable heterosexual feeling and experience—not all the sexes are transposed in his novel—and the complexity of his arrangements of reality. Hardly anything in *A la Recherche* except the detail of Swann's affair with Odette is invented outright; but there are the most elaborate transfers of names and characteristics, usually drawn from several sources. The traditional originals of the characters are, apparently, only part-originals. Although at first the book seems to consist mainly of proper names, in time it does build up a picture of the sheer extent of Proust's curiosity about people, and any amusing piece of gossip Mr. Painter knows about the characters is dropped in.

This is a learned work, just how well learned we shall not know until the notes appear in the second and final volume in two years' time; but it is always entertaining and cumulatively exciting. The illustrations are charming but omit that wonderful photograph of Proust in uniform.

— R. G. G. P.

**Ronald Knox.** Evelyn Waugh. Chapman and Hall, 30/-

It is hard to see how this book could have been better done. The wit of Ronald Knox became almost a legend when he was still a schoolboy, and it was as a satirist that he first made his mark in theological controversy in the years



"When they ask for ½ lb. of No. 3 in the top right-hand corner you can be sure they're newly-weds."

before the 1914 war. Great wits often suffer low spirits in middle life. Their occasional hearers still delight in their jokes but they themselves have wearied of them and sigh for more serious tasks. Such tasks Ronald Knox found to hand and he has left behind him a reputation among English literary converts that is likely to prove second only to that of Newman, if it will be second even to his. All this Mr. Waugh recaptures in prose of extraordinary distinction. It is easy enough to summarize the works of a writer, but to record his life, to tell the world at large why one whose life was uneventful was so loved by his friends is a task of great difficulty but one which Mr. Waugh consummately performs.

— M. C. H.

### CREDIT BALANCE

**Coleridge the Visionary.** J. B. Beer. Chatto and Windus, 30/-. Academically impressive study of Coleridge, discussing nature of romanticism, literary influences, growth of poet's mind, and ideas behind *The Ancient Mariner*, *Christabel* and *Kubla Khan*. Tough but useful reading.

**The Pledge.** Friedrich Dürrenmatt. Translated by Richard and Clara Winston. Cape, 13/6. Swiss policeman, obsessed by belief that suspected child murderer is innocent, becomes corrupted in fight for justice. Prosy tale-telling, with narrator and his narrator, by famous writer of philosophical melodrama and tragic farce, here slightly below form but still interesting.

**Best Detective Stories of Cyril Hare.** Faber, 15/-. An anthology chosen by Michael Gilbert, from an enormous output of short stories. The style is lucid and entertaining, and the formal skill used in manipulating a few characters towards a surprise ending quite extraordinary.

**Hare Sitting Up.** Michael Innes. Gollancz, 12/6. Expert in biological warfare disappears, perhaps taking desperately dangerous disease culture. All humanity is threatened. The result, though, is an engaging, sometimes brilliant, often perfunctory, bundle of comic episodes. My hair didn't sit up.

**Love on a Branch Line.** John Hadfield. *Hutchinson*, 16/-.. Pastoral-comical, as a Whitehall young man dispatched to report on a rural department of his Ministry gets drawn into an Arcadian life, where peers live in old railway trains and their daughters sport naked by lakes. Mr. Hadfield's talent deserves a better setting. But pretty funny at times.

**Admirals in Collision.** Richard Hough. *Hamish Hamilton*, 18/-.. A light and graceful account of one curious incident in the death throes of the Victorian idea of naval warfare. In 1893 Admiral Tryon, anchoring his fleet off Tripoli, gave an order which resulted in the sinking of his flagship. Mr. Hough suggests, convincingly, that Tryon was not so much to blame as has been made out.

### AT THE PLAY

*My Friend Judas* (ARTS)

*Serjeant Musgrave's Dance* (ROYAL COURT)

A RARE double of collectors' bads, on consecutive nights, made this week memorable. At the Arts Andrew Sinclair had adapted his own novel, just published, about Cambridge. On paper *My Friend Judas* was juvenile, insolent and in places amusing; it had a certain sturdiness, but in transit to the stage it has become just another play about an unwashed hero who is terribly sorry for himself. He is a grammar-

school boy in limbo; for him the joys of Cardiff are now tarnished, while those of the world he has been tasting at Cambridge seem only partially accessible. Let down by a girl and a co-editor whose idea of a joke is to publish a private blasphemy under the hero's name, he tries to gas himself and is only saved at the last moment by his best friend. As a picture of Cambridge life it leaves the more spiritual corners unexplored. In

### REP SELECTION

Citizens', Glasgow, *Othello*, until November 14th.

Ipswich Theatre, *South Sea Bubble*, until November 7th.

Guildford Rep, *All in the Family*, until October 31st.

Theatre Royal, Lincoln, *A Hatful of Rain*, until October 31st.

style it veers wildly between Whitehall farce (discovery of undergruette in bed by old college valet) and "The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's" (decent chaps being undermined by cads). Where in the novel Mr. Sinclair, who can write, injected rumbustious life into characters, on the stage most of this is lost. He has no inkling of dramatic construction, and some of his speeches seemed to go on for ever. The best thing in a deplorable evening was the acting of Dinsdale

Landen as the hero. He did contrive, with little help from his author, to build up some sort of character; no one else in the cast made any impression on me.

If anything, *Serjeant Musgrave's Dance* was worse, because it was more pretentious. Why was this piece put on? A play that was anti-Empire and anti-Army would conceivably have its appeal in Sloane Square, but surely not one that was eighty years out of date? If a tract were wanted on those lines it could have been written more persuasively by an intelligent child. In this extraordinary imbroglio four soldiers, led by a bible-thumping sergeant, arrive about 1880 in a mining town in the north of England where the men have been locked out by a wicked colliery owner. There is something visibly sinister about these troops, but we are given no clue to their odd behaviour except that they have some bones in a box. Plans go forward nebulously for a recruiting meeting, the soldiers fraternize in the pub with the miners, the sergeant struts and rants, one of his men is killed in a bit of by-play over the village tart, and when Mr. Arden can think of no better employment for his characters he lets them sing the tag-ends of doggerel ballads. If you can credit this, he keeps the key to his play up his sleeve until his penultimate scene, when we discover that the soldiers are all barking mad and hell-bent on mowing down the populace with their bright new Gatling gun. Somewhere in the Empire they have been unhinged after a fearful night of blood, following the murder of a comrade; and in case we need any further proof of this they produce his skeleton and run it up to the market cross.

There might have been some felicities of dialogue or wit to lighten this lump of absurdity, but I failed to detect them. The acting suffers from the general muddle, but Ian Bannen as the sergeant and Freda Jackson as the publican managed to survive the play's inanities.

### Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

*One More River* (Duke of York's—14/10/59), strong Merchant Navy drama. *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Old Vic—21/10/59), spirited revival. *The Edwardians* (Saville—21/10/59), charming background and acting, very slight story.

—ERIC KEOWN

### AT THE PICTURES

*North by Northwest*—S.O.S. Pacific

AN unexpected quality in *North by Northwest* (Director: Alfred Hitchcock) is its visual attractiveness. Mr. Hitchcock has always been a great one for using striking camera effects to heighten suspense or reinforce moments of terror or strangeness; *Vertigo*, in fact, depended very much on them. But not even in that—which had the same



[*My Friend Judas*

Ben Birt—DINSDALE LANDEN

director of photography, Robert Burks, using the same system, VistaVision Technicolor—do I remember so much that was actively pleasing visually as well as dramatically effective.

I'm not talking about the obvious spectacular beauties of nature such as one may get in a Western but of pictorial effects on every scale, from the simplicity of the huge brown expanse of flat prairie, with one tiny figure, to the complication of the busy New York street scene—and used for a purpose, too, not simply decorative. The tiny figure in the huge brown expanse is so shown to make us feel his vulnerability: the villains are after him; a car or two has roared up out of the distance and flashed past, each a minor bubble of suspense bursting at the last moment, before the crop-spraying plane suddenly reveals itself as the true danger.

Does he escape that? Of course he does—there's a lot more of the film to come yet. He is a New York advertising man who is—I must say, on disconcertingly slight evidence (in a hotel lobby, they think they hear him called by a name they know)—believed by a spy ring to be a Government agent. Then it's simply a question of their trying again and again in different ways to kill him, and his escaping time after time, till the big final scene which has him (Cary Grant) and the heroine (Eva Marie Saint) sliding about and hanging on to the gigantic heads of U.S. Presidents that are carved from the rock of Mount Rushmore, S. Dakota.

It's nonsense, but I enjoyed it; I'm not among those who sternly rebuke Mr. Hitchcock for being less serious than he once was about the duty of chilling our blood. There is more fun here than nerve-racking suspense, some of it very well-invented fun—for instance, an excellent scene at an auction, where the fugitive contrives to be publicly rescued by the police. I doubt whether the story as a whole would stand up to much examination, but I see no point in giving it much. It is, simply, a delight to see such film-making (I have written before, probably too often, about the skill that can keep you for minutes on end watching with absorbed concentration a sequence of quite ordinary actions that would sound like nothing if described in words), and such polished comedy playing, and such photography.

#### PUNCH ALMANACK 1960

The Almanack will be published on November 2 at 2/6d. Postal subscribers will receive a copy without application; other readers are advised to ask their newsgents to reserve a copy for them. Copies can be posted to friends overseas for 3/- each, post paid.



North by Northwest

Roger Thornhill—CARY GRANT

Eve Kendall—EVA MARIE SAINT

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

*S.O.S. Pacific* (Director: Guy Green) begins as a fairly orthodox all-in-the-same-plane story, much like *Jet Storm*, obviously contrived to make spots for a number of stars, each to have his or her opportunity. On that level it is for some time quite effective in its artificial way, and though the characters are mostly conventional (they include the usual tart, elderly British lady, nuclear physicist, lawbreaker and drunk) they are presented well enough. Richard Attenborough has a fine time as a seedy crook straight out of some early Graham Greene "entertainment." But as the film proceeds the plotting gets wilder and more hasty—anything for a moment of excitement. First they're being headed directly into cumulo-nimbus by the automatic pilot, pilot out of action and co-pilot dead. Rescued from that situation, they are cast up on a Pacific island which they soon realize is about to be devastated by an H-bomb test. The bomb is on another island two or three miles away; the only man of the party who can swim so far sets out to disconnect it (having been told how by the nuclear physicist, with diagrams in the sand). Then—sharks; but "There's somebody else out there! It's the pilot!" and so a contender for the position of hero is disposed of. The survivor gets there—only to be shot at by the crook who has arrived earlier by raft without knowing about the bomb. The clock ticks away the seconds, the hero is being shot at as he fumbles with the wires, the plane that is to explode the bomb by radio is in sight. It's all competently done, but the accumulation of mere incident without the gloss of any

special cinematic interest comes to seem quite silly.

**Survey**  
(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Bergman's *Summer Interlude* of 1951 is at the Paris-Pullman, and his new one, *The Face* (7/10/59), continues at the Academy. Of the others in London I would pick *Anatomy of a Murder* (14/10/59) for sheer intensity of enjoyment. *Les Cousins* (7/10/59) is remarkably interesting though uneven. Two good comedies of different kinds still running here after being generally released: *Tati's Mon Oncle* (12/8/59) and *I'm All Right, Jack* (26/8/59).

Among the releases is *The Rabbit Trap* (30/9/59), a thoroughly enjoyable little picture with a story genuinely based on character.

— RICHARD MALLETT

#### AT THE GALLERY

*Segonzac, Master Draughtsman*

**D**UNOYER DE SEGONZAC is one of the group of French artists (Picasso, Braque, Matisse and Derain being others) who achieved international repute between the wars. Unlike some of these he never went abstract and never threw over linear perspective. Apart from his oil paintings (not shown here), his life work consists of a large number of pen and wash drawings, occasionally quite rich in colour, and etchings. They represent urban or pastoral scenes in the Ile de France, in Paris, and in the country round Saint Tropez which he discovered





many years ago and where he has made a home for himself. As a lover of France and a lover of drawings I have known Segonzac's work well since the 'twenties (and saw most of the present large show in Paris last year), and I can truthfully say that I find it always more enchanting. I hope that my delight will be shared by many visitors to the Royal Academy Diploma Gallery.

Segonzac's drawings and water-colours, like those of Dufy, are usually very large: but whereas Dufy's are drawn with a brush or coarse pen Segonzac's are done with, it appears, an ordinary writing nib. Yet he fills the spaces without strain. It is a case of "*fixer les choses longtemps sans être fatigué*," in a word: concentration. Segonzac never relaxes his grip on his design, is never carried away by unimportant detail, and never loses a debonair lightness of touch which he shares with some of the greatest masters of the past. (Closes November 29).

#### Recommended

At Agnew's: Weight, De Grey, and Buhler; straight paintings in which Weight shows a touch of fantasy or of tragedy, De Grey is the most delicate, and Buhler has good portraits. (Closes November 7.)

At the Victoria and Albert Museum, the new Tapestry Court with the Devonshire Hunting Tapestries.

— ADRIAN DAINTRY

#### ON THE AIR

##### Mock Morris

I RECENTLY watched Jimmie James and Dave Morris at work on television in the same week. My admiration for the comedy of Mr. James is so

considerable that I will even switch on "Sunday Night at the London Palladium" (ATV) if he is billed to appear, thereby running a fearful risk of catching Bruce Forsyth at play. Mr. James was not in his best form, and much of what he did he has been doing for as long as I can remember; but it was a good, lowbrow music-hall act, effortlessly carried through by a comic who knows his business from A to Z and hasn't made the mistake of moving out of it. Dave Morris, it seems to me, made a grave mistake when he allowed his engaging if rough and ready talents to be exposed in a series of television "situation comedies." "The Artful Dodger" (BBC) does not come off because (apart from the weakness of the script as such) the whole conception is too old-fashioned for the medium. Lodgers, mothers-in-law, gormless Lancashire lads, nagging wives and all the other moth-eaten pegs for humour are still acceptable in what is left of music-hall, because in the magic little pool of limelight, with the drummer sniggering in the orchestra pit and the clank of empties coming from the stalls bar, they form a quaint, timeless fantasy only remotely concerned with life in 1959, like trampoline artists or tap dancers; and in their traditional setting no one dreams of questioning them. Expanded into playlets, with real furniture, practical props and a "story line," and photographed in a strong light with close-ups and every modern convenience, the fantasy is bound to emerge as a dreary, ugly travesty of a way of life that hardly existed anyway outside *Comic Cuts*. The five-minute black-out music-hall sketch cannot be translated into television terms; it cannot be bawdy enough, or rough enough at the edges, or spontaneous or rowdy or downright foolish enough, because the camera doesn't understand and appreciate these

qualities as we used to when we sat munching peanuts in the circle: the camera is pitiless and precise, and what is more it caters for a different breed of customer.

Mention must be made here, however belatedly, of the latest item prepared for the BBC, by Colin Morris and Gilchrist Calder. This was called "Who, Me?" and was superb. The writing of Mr. Morris, the production of Mr. Calder, the playing of Lee Montague and others whose names escape me (I suppose the documentary flavour may be increased by omitting the cast list from *Radio Times*, but the system has its disadvantages, and I can only raise my hat in tribute to a group of Nameless Ones) were all first-class. I have never before heard the authentic jabbing wit of ordinary Liverpool speech captured by a writer of dialogue—and I'm not forgetting Kavanagh and Handley, who turned it into a kind of mad poetry. I also suspect that the goings-on in the police-station, as recorded here, were as true to life as one could reasonably hope to get them on the little screen. I quarrelled with Len's final line, which was strained and superfluous; having removed this tiny flaw, if I had anything to do with it I would enter the film in every international television festival there is, and expect a sideboard-full of trophies.

Recognizable Liverpool talk turned up again a little while ago in a play by Alun Owen called "No Tram to Lime Street" (ABC). Here I thought the actual dramatic content, even within the limits imposed by Mr. Owen himself, was rather too slight. But this fault was offset by some brilliant passages of dialogue in the Paddy Chayevsky manner—notably in the scenes between Billie Whitelaw and Jack Hedley. Their playing, and that of most of the cast, was unusually sensitive: they seemed actually to understand the writer's most subtle intentions, and this is a rare thing. The direction by William Kotcheff was no doubt a great help here, and I hope we may see more of Mr. Owen's work as sympathetically treated. On this showing alone he seems to know what television writing is all about.

I was astonished, not to say delighted, to find that the first of Sir Kenneth Clark's series of talks about "Five Revolutionary Painters" (ATV) was not interrupted by a single commercial. But then, I suppose the feeling among space-buyers is that would-be purchasers of bird-seed, floor-polish or toilet paper are not likely to be found watching a programme about a chap called Goya, who used to paint pictures and snuffed it donkey's years ago. If this is so (and we're all damned if it is), they missed a delightful half-hour's viewing.

— HENRY TURTON

## As They Might Have Been

II RANDOLPH CHURCHILL

*PRIME MINISTER RANDOLPH on the Front Bench  
Might cause the most resolute Briton to blench.  
Thank Heaven we've never exceeded the stage  
Where journalist Randolph is on the front page.*



# Out of Cliché-land

By PATRICK SKENE CATLING

SINCE Mr. Sydney Box (not then foreseeing his retirement) decided on the production of *Operation Overlord*, another film about D-Day, the script-writer, Mr. Bryan Forbes, has been busy screening thousands of feet of official film in the Imperial War Museum, and I, in the meantime, have not been sitting by idle. I have been sitting thinking how to help them fulfil their hope, as Mr. Forbes expressed it, "to get British war films out of cliché-land."

"In our film," declared Mr. John Temple-Smith, the executive producer, who is evidently able to recall that epic military action of fifteen years ago without the ordinary emotions that some other people still feel about it, "there will be no British crusaders, no German villains—just people."

Keeping these intentions uppermost in mind I have at last been able to generate a few ideas which I hereby pass along to Mr. Box and company:

Reveal some of the men of the Wehrmacht in ludicrously ill-fitting uniforms and boots with rubber (non-clicking) heels. War films up to now have suggested that quartermasters blind or indifferent to the tape measure were peculiar to the Allied forces. Nothing military is more lovable than a citizen-soldier in trousers too big and a cap too small for him, or vice versa.

Why should British and American soldiers continue to win all the audience's sympathy while the soldiers who used to be known as "the enemy" are represented as an army of efficient identical robots like models for some Prussian Moss Bros?

Conversely, on the British side, present some tyrannical officers strutting about in exquisitely tailored battle-dress, menacingly gesturing with their swagger sticks and barking out orders in cruel, sarcastic U-voices.

Strictly suppress flashbacks to civilian family life. If a hard-bitten-looking commando, examining his wallet just before embarkation, comes across snapshots of a woman and child it should be made quite clear that (a) she is not his wife, (b) he does not like her very much, and (c) anyway he was only counting money made by selling Army stores in the black market.

Should it be found unavoidable, for the sake of justifying some dramatic documentary footage, to recognize the presence of certain American forces in the Channel area on D-Day, by all means use a brief shot of the interior of a Flying Fortress. But do not commit the Democratic Melting-Pot cliché, giving the members of the crew names such as O'Houlihan, Schwartz, Jones and Dabrowski; they should be called Worthington Cabot Griswold III, Cabot

Griswold Worthington III, Griswold Worthington Cabot Jr. (how did he slip in?), and so on, and they should all be very snobbish about ranks.

It is quite permissible to depict cowards in this movie, on the conditions that they are British and do not at a climactic moment of crisis attempt cornily to redeem themselves. A nice touch would be a shot of an S.S. sergeant in his braces and spectacles watering the flowers around his 88 emplacement. And perhaps the Message of the picture should be assigned to two forward-looking Germans who have been retreating cross-country from the coast on their own initiative since the air raids of D minus 1.

"I may not be carrying out orders," says Kraut 1 to Kraut 2, "but I am a Nazi still."

"Quite so," replies Kraut 2. "It is time now that somebody took a lead to bring an end to this foolishness. We aren't crusaders; they aren't villains."

"All just people, you mean?" suggests Kraut 1.

"They are just people. They're the ones that keep talking about unconditional surrender and all that jazz. So surrender. We're the industrial geniuses, aren't we? We'll show them how to rebuild the Ruhr for us."

"Ah, Krupp, you old devil!" admiringly exclaims Kraut 1.



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